(4) 0856-B-03 PREX 7.10:FBIS-EAS-92-065
24-38

FOREIGN BROADCAST INFORMATION SERVICE

Daily Report

East Asia

FBIS-EAS-92-065
Friday
3 April 1992

JB 99-015247
JL: 21, 31, 43
COMPLETED

Daily Report
East Asia

FBIS-EAS-92-065 *3 April 1992*

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Japan

Tokyo, U.S. Plan To Discuss SSC Project

OW0304113192 Tokyo KYODO in English 0847 GMT 3 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 3 KYODO—Japan said Friday it will hold talks here next week with the United States on possible Japanese participation in U.S.-initiated superconducting super collider (SSC) project.

The talks next Thursday and Friday will be the first of their kind since the two countries agreed to form a working group on the 8 billion dollar project during President George Bush's January visit to Japan, said Foreign Ministry Spokesman Masamichi Hanabusa.

The joint working group "will mainly discuss the significance of the SSC to physics as well as the feasibility of its construction," Hanabusa said.

The collider, an 85-kilometer circular tunnel to be built in Texas, would split atoms by hurling protons (atomic particles) at each other at velocities approaching the speed of light.

The U.S. has been pressing the Japanese Government to participate in the project but some Japanese scientists and policymakers wonder whether the ambiguous significance of the project justifies its massive cost.

Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa and Bush inked a wide-ranging "action plan" during the visit, calling in part for the creation of a joint working group "to examine technical and other essential aspects of the SSC project and to consider how this project can be formulated as an international project to enable Japan to participate."

Accord With U.S. on Paper Dispute Said Close

OW0304110192 Tokyo KYODO in English 1046 GMT 3 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 3 KYODO—Japan and the United States are close to agreement on a dispute over trade in paper, with Japan agreeing to a number of measures to improve access to its market, Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) sources said Friday.

The two governments are likely to finish their talks in Washington as early as this week, the sources said.

They missed the March 31 deadline for coming up with a market access agreement for foreign paper exports in accordance with the "action plan" of bilateral trade steps negotiated during U.S. President George Bush's January visit.

The sources said the likely agreement will require Japan to conduct a survey on its paper distribution system to investigate whether there are business practices hampering the penetration of foreign products.

Another survey is envisioned on finding out if major Japanese companies are willing to use imported paper.

The Japanese Government will also encourage the industry to purchase more foreign paper, while the U.S. Government will call for stepped-up industrial efforts for improving the quality of U.S. paper products.

The agreement, however, will not commit Japan to a specific market share of foreign products, though Washington has persistently called for such numerical targets that would serve as a gauge of Japan's effort.

Foreign share of the Japanese paper market has been relatively minor, with imports accounting for 3.7 percent in 1990 against 31 percent in the European Community and nearly 15 percent in the U.S.

But the sources attributed the poor performance of foreign exports to the bulkiness of the product, which makes it unsuitable for long-distance transportation.

This argument is justified, they said, by the fact that foreign share of the U.S. paper market is only 3 percent, excluding imports from neighboring Canada.

Issue of Naha Military Port's Return Viewed

OW0204060192 Naha RYUKYU SHIMPO in Japanese 2 Apr 92 Morning Edition p 1

[Report on interview with Yukio Sato, chief of the Foreign Ministry's North American Affairs Bureau, by unidentified RYUKYU SHIMPO reporter "recently" in Tokyo]

[Text] In his interview, Yukio Sato, chief of the Foreign Ministry's North American Affairs Bureau, said: "We hope to make a decision on the return of the Naha Military Port on 15 May, the 20th anniversary of the reversion of Okinawa to the mainland." Thus, he disclosed that the Japanese Government would make an official decision on the return of the Naha Military Port.

Touching on the issue of the partial return of the Naha Military Port, North American Bureau Chief Sato pointed out that the landlords' association has demanded the return of the entire port and stated his view that no consensus has yet been reached among the prefectural residents and landlords. However, he said: "We regard the issue of the Naha Military Port as a major issue on which a decision should be made on 15 May," and he strongly hinted that the return of the Naha Military Port is regarded as a major feature in the activities commemorating the 20th anniversary of the reversion of Okinawa to the mainland.

The chief added: "It is not appropriate that while the Naha Military Port remains unreturned, other sites are returned. The focal point lies in the issue of the return of the Naha Military Port." Thus, he indicated his understanding that with 15 May near at hand, the issue of the return of the port is an urgent one that should be separated from the issue of the return of the 23 sites on which an accord was reached in June 1990 as well as

other issues concerning the return. Regarding the so-called "bill on special measures related to the reversion of military lands" that the opposition parties have submitted to the Diet, Sato, as he had stated at the Diet session, indicated a negative view from the standpoint of maintaining the Security Treaty. However, he avoided commenting on issues concerning utilization of military land sites and compensation for landlords, saying that these issues are not within the jurisdiction of his office.

In addition, the chief stated that U.S. Vice President Quayle will certainly attend a ceremony commemorating the 20th anniversary of the reversion of Okinawa to the mainland organized by the government as the representative of the U.S. Government. Nevertheless, regarding the expected visit to Okinawa by the vice president, he indicated the view that "it may be difficult because of the schedule of the presidential election."

Regarding his visit to Okinawa, the chief indicated that he "hopes to visit Okinawa as soon as possible after the Diet session ends."

Joint Group To Study Russian Gas Pipeline Plan

OW0304115492 Tokyo KYODO in English 0839 GMT 3 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 3 KYODO—A consortium of Japanese trading firm Tokyo Boeki Co. and Far East Energy Co. of the United States will conduct feasibility studies on a project to lay natural gas pipelines from Siberia to Japan, Tokyo Boeki officials said Friday.

The officials said Tokyo Boeki and Far East have signed contracts with the Russian Government to conduct the studies on a proposal to lay two pipelines from the Yakut oil and gas fields to Hokkaido, northern Japan, and to Kyushu, southern Japan.

The two companies have also won rights to take part in a Yakut natural gas exploitation project on a priority basis, the officials said.

They said the companies will ask other firms in Japan, the U.S., Europe, and South Korea to take part in the project, estimated to cost 1 trillion to 1.5 trillion yen.

The plans call for the laying of a 4,000-kilometer gas pipeline from Yakut to Wakkanai, Hokkaido, via Sakhalin, and a 5,000-kilometer pipeline to northern Kyushu, via Vladivostok and North and South Korea, the officials said.

In addition, there are plans to lay a 3,000-kilometer oil pipeline from Yakut to Vanino in the Russian Far East.

All the pipelines are expected to be completed by the second half of 1996, the officials said.

They said oil supplies via the pipelines are expected to start in late 1996 and natural gas supplies are likely to begin after 2000.

Russian authorities estimate there are some 900 billion cubic meters of natural gas deposits and 300 million tons of crude oil deposits in the Yakut region.

Watanabe Links Aid to Russia to Defense Cuts

OW0304041892 Tokyo KYODO in English 0358 GMT 03 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 3 (KYODO)—Foreign Minister Michio Watanabe on Friday indicated that Japan intends to press at the seven-nation summit in Munich in July for reductions in Russian defense expenditures as a condition of more Western aid.

Watanabe, speaking to reporters after a morning cabinet meeting, said it is "wrong" for Russia to be asking for Western funds and assistance to feed its people and raise their standard of living, while at the same time channeling domestic funds toward building new aircraft carriers and submarines.

He said Japan could not agree to the provision of large-scale funds to Russia as long as it maintains its present level of budgetary allocations for defense.

Government officials said Thursday that Japan plans to extend several billion dollars out of the 24 billion dollar aid package the Group of Seven (G-7) countries have agreed in principle to supply to the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

They said Japan would bear about 1 billion dollars of the 6 billion dollars allocated in the program to setting up a fund to stabilize the ruble.

Watanabe said that Japan's contributing to the ruble fund would not contradict its policy of linking economic assistance for Russia to progress in negotiations on the northern territories issue.

Symposium Upholds 1956 Pledge on Territories

OW0204143192 Tokyo KYODO in English 1249 GMT 02 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 2 KYODO—Japanese and Russian academics and government officials ended a three-day symposium Thursday in full agreement a resolution to their countries' territorial dispute should involve at least the transfer of two islands to Japan.

But participants in the 13th Japan-Russia symposium said the two sides failed to reach a consensus on the disposition of the other two disputed islands seized by the Soviet Army at the end of World War II.

A communique issued at the end of the symposium said the Russian side proposed the 1956 Japan-Soviet joint declaration should serve as a starting point for future talks on the territorial issue.

Moscow pledged in the joint declaration to hand over Shikotan Island and the Habomai islets to Japan after

conclusion of a peace treaty but unilaterally renounced that pledge in a 1960 diplomatic memorandum.

Russian participants told reporters in a press conference that after Russia recognizes Japan's sovereignty over the two islands, the subject of negotiations should quickly shift to their respective claims to the two larger islands, Etorofu and Kunashiri.

The communique said the Japanese side argued that Russian recognition of Japanese sovereignty for all four islands is the key to making Russian President Boris Yeltsin's visit to Japan in September a success.

The results of the symposium are to be briefed to Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa and Foreign Minister Michio Watanabe next Tuesday. Yeltsin and Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev are also to be briefed in Moscow.

Among the well-known Russian participants were Georgiy Kunadze, the country's deputy foreign minister, Aleksandr Yakovlev, a former Soviet Politburo member and close aide to former President Mikhail Gorbachev, and Konstantin Sarkisov, a former Soviet government specialist on Japan.

Vladren Martynov, director of the Moscow-based think tank, The Institute of World Economy and International Relations, told reporters it was the first time in the group's 13 meetings since 1973 the two "mutually explored rational compromises" on the territorial dispute.

Martynov welcomed the Japanese side's "modification" of its formerly intransigent position, which he said was "as hard as reinforced concrete."

He said the Soviet pledge in the 1956 joint declaration must be adhered to by Russia "from the standpoint of restoring historical justice."

Foreign Minister Kozyrev, during his visit to Japan last month, said Russia, as the successor state to the Soviet Union, would succeed all the rights and obligations of its international promises, including the 1956 declaration.

But Japanese officials insisted that in saying so he did not clearly recognize Japan's sovereignty over Shikotan and the Habomai group as he made no mention of retracting the 1960 memorandum.

Sarkisov said Russia cannot accept Japan's proposal for Yeltsin to initially recognize Japan's "residual sovereignty" over all four islands as a first step toward a territorial resolution, with their actual transfer being put off for several years.

He said acceptance of the proposal would give the Russian populace the impression the government is selling or bartering the islands in an undignified manner.

Sarkisov said a less politically dangerous solution for the Russian government would be one "based on the principle of respect for international law as it relates to the settlement of problems outstanding from World War II."

Japanese academic Hidejiro Kotani noted that under Sarkisov's scheme, it would be easier for Russia to justify a transfer of territory to Japan and skirt possible constitutional constraints by saying the two countries are merely demilitarizing a border yet to be defined.

Sarkisov said Russia should at the outset of the next bilateral working group talks on a peace treaty "reconfirm that the 1956 joint declaration providing for the transfer of two islands to Japan is binding on Russia and is in fact an obligation of Russia."

He said after the Japanese side states the reconfirmation is not sufficient to conclude a peace treaty, the talks should focus on the disposition of Kunashiri and Etorofu as it relates to international law.

Martynov said Russia would not oppose concluding a peace treaty after relinquishing sovereignty over Shikotan and the Habomai group, with a provision saying negotiations would continue over Kunashiri and Etorofu.

Former Soviet Republic of Georgia Recognized

OW0304065492 Tokyo KYODO in English 0138 GMT 3 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 3, (KYODO)—The government decided at a cabinet meeting on Friday to recognize the former Soviet republic of Georgia, government officials said.

The government has so far delayed recognition because of the continued fighting in the republic even after the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

But the fighting there has ceased since the appointment of former Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze as the chairman of a new top state body.

Japan's establishment of diplomatic relations with the Transcaucasian state will be based on similar criteria to its relations with the rest of the former Soviet Union, the officials said.

These include compliance with the terms of treaties adhered to by the former Soviet Union, unified control of nuclear weapons, a respect for basic human rights and a move toward a market economy.

Georgia remains the only one of 12 former republics not in the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Georgia is the last of the 15 former Soviet republics, [words indistinct] to which Japan has extended recognition.

Last December, Japan recognized the 10 republics other than Russia.

Japan has since opened diplomatic relations with all of them except Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Turkmenistan.

First Japanese Leaves Libya Since Sanctions

OW0304081092 Tokyo KYODO in English 0731 GMT 3 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 3 KYODO—A Japanese businessman has left Libya, becoming the first Japanese to depart Tripoli since the United Nations imposed sanctions against the African nation calling for the surrender of suspects in the bombings of American and French airliners, Foreign Ministry officials said Friday.

According to reports from the Japanese Embassy in Libya, the man left the country Thursday, officials said. He was not immediately identified.

He is the first of 56 Japanese citizens in Libya to leave the country since Monday when the U.N. Security Council adopted a resolution to impose aviation, arms and diplomatic sanctions against the country, they said.

The U.N. sanctions will take effect on April 15.

The officials said the Japanese Foreign Ministry urged the remaining Japanese to leave Libya as soon as possible. Five of those have not yet obtained visas to leave the country, the officials said.

On Monday, the U.N. Security Council demanded that Libya surrender two suspects accused of the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am flight over Lockerbie, Scotland, in which 270 people died.

It also urged Libya to cooperate with an investigation into the 1989 bombing of a French airline over Niger in which 171 people were killed.

Of 15 U.N. Security Council members, Japan was one of 10 countries that voted for the resolution Tuesday which was jointly sponsored by the United States, Britain, and France.

Appointment of New French Premier Welcomed

OW0204141892 Tokyo KYODO in English 1306 GMT 02 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 2 KYODO—Japanese Government officials welcomed Thursday the appointment of Pierre Beregovoy as French prime minister, replacing Edith Cresson.

Beregovoy was finance minister and also "superminister," with responsibilities for the budget, commerce, the postal service, and trade and industry under the Cresson cabinet.

Finance Minister Tsutomu Hata, who has met Beregovoy, praised him as a "fine gentleman of intelligence."

Beregovoy promoted a campaign for exports to Japan and sought to improve economic relations with the country, despite Cresson's controversial remarks about Japan.

Some Japanese officials said, however, uncertainties remain over French policies toward the Uruguay Round of global trade talks under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT).

Although Beregovoy is considered a promoter of the Uruguay Round, the ruling Socialist Party's losses in recent local and regional elections may tend to limit the party's policy options, political analysts said.

Keidanren Survey of Asian Executives Published

OW0204141692 Tokyo KYODO in English 1204 GMT 02 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 2 KYODO—Most top management officials in Japan and East Asian countries do not want Japan to have more political power in Asia, according to a survey published Thursday by Japan's foremost business organization.

The survey on the next 10 years in Asia, conducted by the Federation of Economic Organizations (Keidanren), also showed nearly 60 percent of the pollees expected a unification of North and South Korea within the next decade.

The survey was based on questionnaires sent in February and March to 162 executives in Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Indonesia. A total 106 executives responded.

Nearly 80 percent of the respondents in Japan and over 70 percent of those in other countries predicted that Japan will strengthen its diplomatic initiatives in Asia.

Asked about the roles Japan should play in Asia, the largest number of the pollees replied it should step up economic aid.

But only 30 percent said Japan should strengthen its political initiatives.

On the economic side, the pollees predicted [word indistinct] economic growth in Asia, an increase in intra-Asia trade, closer relations in the East Asian economic bloc, and an internationalization of the Chinese market in the next decade.

Panamanians Arrested in Murder of Businessman

OW0304054892 Tokyo KYODO in English 0423 GMT 03 Apr 92

[Text] Panama City, April 2 (KYODO)—Officials from Panama's Supreme Public Prosecutors Office arrested Thursday night three people in connection with the kidnapping and murder of a Japanese businessman in March, officials said.

The prosecutors arrested Hector Chang, an employee of Citizen Latinamerica Corp., his wife, and brother for allegedly kidnapping and killing Takashi Ota, who had been working in Panama as Citizen's business representative, prosecutors said.

Chang, a 38-year-old Chinese-Peruvian, was Ota's direct subordinate at the company, which is an affiliate of

Tokyo-based Citizen Watch Co. Police believe company officials entrusted Chang with carrying the ransom money to the kidnappers.

The names of Chang's wife and brother were not available.

Chang and his wife were arrested Thursday near their home in the center of Panama City, they said.

His brother was arrested near the Colombian border on suspicion of conspiring with Chang. Two other men, including another brother of Chang, are wanted, the prosecutors said.

Ota, 45, was found dead March 20 on the bank of a river in Chepo, 60 kilometers east of Panama City, after being missing since March 14.

He was not identified until March 26 because his face and fingers had been burned with chemicals.

The prosecution said Chang admitted to kidnapping and killing Ota in an attempt to get money to cover his large gambling debts.

Investigators had suspected that Ota's killer had been someone who knew the company well, and had been observing Chang's activities since March 26.

Ota was reportedly last seen outside a Chinese restaurant in Panama City on March 14.

Police said Citizen paid a 750,000 dollar ransom on March 17 in a bid to gain Ota's release. The company and the Japanese Embassy, however, have neither confirmed nor denied paying a ransom.

Upper House Agrees To Summon Sagawa Chairman

OW0304122492 Tokyo KYODO in English 1128 GMT 3 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 3 KYODO—The House of Councillors will summon the founder of the scandal-ridden Sagawa Kyubin business group to testify on a massive loan scandal involving his company, officials said Friday.

The budget committee of the second chamber will summon Kiyoshi Sagawa, 70, of Japan's No. 2 trucking corporation, as an unsworn witness, not as a sworn witness who could be prosecuted for false testimony, the officials said.

But since a subpoena of an unsworn witness is not legally binding, it is not known whether Sagawa would appear, the officials said.

Representatives of the governing Liberal Democratic Party and opposition groups agreed to summon him during a backstage bargaining session Friday to help promote deliberations on the 72.2 trillion yen state budget for fiscal 1992, which started Wednesday.

Tokyo Sagawa Kyubin Co., a key firm in the Sagawa Group, is at the center of the loan scandal involving over 500 billion yen of loans and loan guarantees extended by two former company executives.

Politicians from both ruling and opposition camps have acknowledged receiving political funds from Sagawa Kyubin companies.

The Social Democratic Party [SDPP] , the No. 1 opposition party, has demanded that the Diet summon Sagawa, former State Minister Fumio Abe, and Goro Moriguchi, a former vice president of Kyowa Co., as sworn witnesses.

Abe, a one-time ally of Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa, and Moriguchi have been indicted on charges that Moriguchi gave Abe 90 million yen in bribes to use his influence to help Kyowa, a now defunct steel-frame maker.

The parties failed to reach accord on whether to summon Abe and Moriguchi to the Diet, officials said.

The SDP had threatened to take a vote on a motion to summon the three men as sworn witnesses to the opposition-controlled upper chamber.

Parties Said To Collect 153 Billion Yen in 1990

OW0304120292 Tokyo KYODO in English 0844 GMT 3 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 3 KYODO—Political parties and politician-support groups received a record of more than 150 billion yen in 1990 from local supporters in prefectures across Japan, the Home Affairs Ministry said in a report Friday.

The report said funds raised by 50,352 political parties and groups hit a record 153,810 million yen in 1990, up 1.4 percent from a year before.

Ministry officials said the record amount was due to the general election as well as local elections which were all held in 1990, the last year for which latest data were available.

The ministry compiled the report after the parties and groups in local cities and towns declared their fund-raising balance of payments to local election control committees in 47 prefectures.

Of the 153 billion yen total, 37.9 percent or 4.2 percentage points less than the year before was collected by the parties themselves in 1990. Revenue collected by politician support groups reached 62.1 percent, up 4.2 percentage points, the report said.

The parties and groups spent a total of 147,930 million yen in 1990, down 0.1 percent from one year earlier.

In addition, the total raised by local and central party or support group offices hit a record 338.3 billion yen in 1990, up 4.1 percent from a year before, the report said.

It said that last September the ministry released a report on political fund-raising that said central offices of political

parties and groups in Tokyo and its surrounding areas collected a total of 184,490 million yen, the report said. ;

Of the 50,352 political parties and groups in the prefectures, 627 political parties and groups held fund-raising parties in 1990.

They received a total of 5.71 billion yen from the parties over the course of the year, up 47.3 percent from one year before, the report said.

The report also said a sharp rise in the percentage of money collected by fund-raising parties in local cities and towns was due to the declining number of such parties held in Tokyo as a result of the 1988-1989 Recruit stocks-for-favors scandal.

In the prefectures, the political party collecting the largest amount of money was the Japanese Communist Party which ranked first with a total of 28.66 billion yen, down 3.8 percent from the year before.

The ruling Liberal Democratic Party ranked second with 16.5 billion yen (down 12.9 percent), followed by the Social Democratic Party at 6.45 billion yen (down 5.8 percent), the Democratic Socialist Party at 3.27 billion yen (down 17.2 percent), and Komeito at 2.95 billion yen (down 25.3 percent).

Miyazawa Reassures Public About Stock Slump

OW0304065592 Tokyo KYODO in English 0602 GMT 3 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 3 (KYODO)—Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa said Friday that Tokyo stock prices will be "all right by and by," in light of a continuing market plunge.

He told reporters that the sharp declines in stock prices are not directly related to the government's economic policy.

Stock prices in Tokyo declined substantially on Friday morning, with the benchmark Nikkei Stock Average falling below the 18,000 mark for the first time in more than five years.

Nobuhiko Matsuno, director general of the Securities Bureau at the Ministry of Finance (MOF), called securities industry leaders, including the presidents of the "big four" brokerages and chairman of the Japan Securities Dealers Association, to the ministry.

Ministry officials said Matsuno told the industry leaders that his office will act decisively to help stabilize the market by such means as supporting sales of large-lot stock investment trusts.

The leaders told Matsuno that they did not think investors were in a panic, and that the securities industry will make an all-out effort to recover investors' confidence in the market, according to the MOF officials.

The officials said MOF is concerned about the worsening stock slump, despite a cut in the official discount rate Wednesday. Further declines in stock prices would limit fund-raising activities by corporations and would bring adverse effects, they said.

In the afternoon Chief Cabinet Secretary Koichi Kato told reporters that he and other top government officials were concerned about the slumping stock prices. Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa has been concerned about the market since assuming his post, he said.

Of the Nikkei index's morning drop below 18,000, Kato would only describe the market as "seesawing."

A government package of economic stimulation measures announced Tuesday was aimed at boosting economic fundamentals, Kato said.

He said the government will be watching developments from a long-term perspective.

A senior Economic Planning Agency (EPA) official indicated that worries over the future of the Japanese economy are sending stock prices lower than the country's real economic strength warrants.

He said currency exchange rates and stock prices tend to move erratically when there are such psychological concerns, adding that stock prices seem to be shifting too much to the lower edge.

Yasuda: Nikkei at 24,000-Yen Level 'Appropriate'

OW0304115392 Tokyo KYODO in English 0855 GMT 3 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 3 KYODO—A senior Finance Ministry official, in an unusual move Friday, indicated that it would be appropriate for the Nikkei stock average index to reach the 24,000 yen level.

Vice Finance Minister Hiroshi Yasuda suggested at a news conference that current stock prices were unnecessarily low.

Referring to the sluggish stock market, Yasuda said the morning stock price level corresponded to that seen when Japan's economy hit a low amid the yen's appreciation after the 1985 Plaza Accord.

"Taking into consideration that since then Japan's economy has grown at a growth pace of an average 6 percent per year, stock prices (on the 225-issue Nikkei stock average index) can be calculated to be 24,000 points," Yasuda said.

The Nikkei index closed Friday at 18,559.71, up 273.68 points from Thursday's close.

Market analysts said it is quite unusual for the vice finance minister to make official comments on specific stock price levels.

Asked about measures his ministry could take to vitalize the stock market, Yasuda said the ministry may ask

companies to raise payout ratios of stocks and approve large-lot stock investment trusts to improve stock demand-supply situation.

He also said finance officials could call for the Justice Ministry to review company purchases of their own stocks. The practice is currently banned under commercial law.

Looking ahead concerning the nation's economy, Yasuda said, the Japanese economy's whole demand "is by no means weak."

He also appealed to investors to "be confident and cheer up."

Foreigners Continue as Net Buyers of Stocks

OW0304120792 Tokyo KYODO in English 0852 GMT 3 Apr 92

[Excerpt] Tokyo, April 3 KYODO—Foreign investors remained as net buyers of Japanese stocks in February for the 15th straight month, the Finance Ministry said Friday.

Foreigners bought a total of 8,060 million dollars' worth of Japanese stocks, while selling 5,740 million dollars' worth, with a net purchase figure amounting to 2,320 million dollars.

The net figure compared with 2,190 million dollars of net buying in January.

A ministry official said the Japanese stock market in February was weak, with the Nikkei stock average index started the month at the 22,000 level and ended in the 21,000 level.

Despite the weak market, foreign investors remained active in buying, attracted by relatively low prices, following the collapse of Japan's "bubble" economy, a ministry official said.

Foreigners are likely to remain net buyers in March, according to data collected so far, the official added.

But foreign investors also sold a net 1,165 million dollars' worth of Japanese bonds in February, after buying a net 3,072 million dollars in bonds in January.

The official said selling was prompted by two reasons—a Japanese bond market in an adjustment phase from the end of January and also by the higher value of the U.S. dollar against the yen.

Meanwhile, Japanese investors sold foreign stocks more than they bought in February to take profit from firm overseas markets, the official said.

Net selling of foreign stocks totaled 893 million dollars, following a monthly record 2,389 million dollars in sales for January.

Japanese investors bought a net 1,448 million dollars' worth of foreign bonds, largely Euroyen bonds, the official said. They were net buyers of 7,423 million dollars in the previous month. [passaged omitted]

Deregulation of Insurance Industry Considered

OW0204141992 Tokyo KYODO in English 1225 GMT 02 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 2 KYODO—Officials from the banking and securities industries and the insurance industry Thursday remained split over the deregulation of the insurance industry, Finance Ministry officials said.

The occasion was a meeting of the Insurance Council, an advisory body to the ministry, which dealt with a request from insurance companies to engage in operations such as extending foreign currency-denominated loans, making loan guarantees, and arranging sales of private debentures, the officials said.

Council members representing the banking and securities industries expressed doubts about some of the operations, which they said were not directly related to insurance business.

Officials of the council's secretariat told the meeting that life insurance companies, as mutual companies diversifying into noninsurance markets, must establish their own "solvency margin" standards to avoid financial risks.

The standards would be equivalent to capital adequacy standards set by the Basel-based Bank for International Settlements (BIS) for all banks operating internationally, the officials said.

Executives Take Pay Cuts at Electronics Firms

OW0304120892 Tokyo KYODO in English 0931 GMT 3 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 3 KYODO—Fujitsu Ltd., Toshiba Corp., and Victor Co. of Japan said Friday they will cut the salaries of their top executives, starting this month.

Fujitsu and Victor also said they will freeze pay raises for management officials other than members of the board of directors, also starting this month.

The moves were prompted by the companies' poor business performance amid slumping sales of computers, audio-visual products, and other electronics equipment, company officials said.

The electronics companies did not say how long the pay cuts and freezes will last.

IBM Japan Ltd. and Hitachi Ltd. were among other companies which earlier announced pay cuts and freezes for middle to top management officials, citing poor business performance.

Sony Corp. and Mitsubishi Electric Co. said they were considering pay cuts for executives.

Fujitsu said the firm's chairman, vice chairman, and president will take pay cuts of 35 percent. The vice president and senior managing directors will take 25 percent cuts. Further, executive directors will take a 20 percent cut in pay and directors pay will be cut 15 percent.

Victor said members of the board will take an average 20 percent pay cut, with higher officials facing steeper cuts.

Toshiba declined to give the margin of pay cuts for members of the board.

The company said other management officials will receive annual pay raises, unlike at Fujitsu and Victor.

For the year which ended on March 31, Fujitsu estimated its pretax profit at 50 billion yen, down 60.7 percent from the previous year, while Toshiba estimated its pretax earnings at 70 billion yen, down 60 percent.

Victor said it expects to report a pretax loss for the year.

The three companies said prospects for business recovery are poor for the year which will end in March 1993.

Toyota Motor To Raise Truck, Bus Prices 3.6%

OW0304081292 Tokyo KYODO in English 0728 GMT 3 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 3 KYODO—Toyota Motor Corp. said Friday it will raise commercial vehicle prices by an average of 3.6 percent on 18 models such as buses and trucks.

The hikes, effective May 6, will be the first since the 1974 oil crisis.

The Japanese automaker attributed the increase to higher labor and material costs as well as additional spending on research and development activities.

Japan's other automakers have already announced that they will raise their commercial vehicle prices by about 4 percent.

Toyota's price hikes, which will include the Dyna 3700 diesel, Corolla van, and the Corona van 2000 diesel DX models, range between 3.8 percent and 1.9 percent, the company said.

Tokyo Urges Landlords Not To Bar Foreigners

OW0304080792 Tokyo KYODO in English 0653 GMT 3 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 3 KYODO—The Tokyo Metropolitan Government has decided to launch a campaign to eliminate discrimination against foreigners by real estate agencies and landlords, officials said Friday.

The move follows the coming into effect from Wednesday of the first local government housing ordinance in Japan to stipulate basic human rights guarantees.

The Tokyo campaign will focus on guaranteeing the rights of the elderly and the handicapped as well as foreigners looking for private rental accommodation.

The metropolitan government is currently investigating cases of discrimination in Tokyo.

Tokyo had about 250,000 registered foreigners at the end of December, compared with approximately 118,000 foreigners 10 years ago.

The increase has been accompanied by a rise in the number of landlords refusing accommodation to foreigners, officials said.

Many apparently refuse because they say foreigners cannot understand Japanese and are therefore unable to communicate with their neighbors or that foreigners sign rental contracts agreeing to single occupancy and then share with friends.

The new housing ordinance stipulates that private rental accommodation shall not be denied to anyone on the basis of age, physical handicap, or nationality.

Firm Approved To Build Nuclear Waste Storage

OW0304064692 Tokyo KYODO in English 0306 GMT 3 Apr 92

[Text] Tokyo, April 3 (KYODO)—Kanzo Tanigawa, director general of the Science and Technology Agency on Friday authorized construction of a high-level radioactive waste storage facility in Rokkasho, Aomori Prefecture, northern Japan.

The facility, to be built by Japan Nuclear Fuel Service Co., is located next to a plant that will reprocess spent nuclear fuel.

The Tokyo-based company plans to begin construction this month and operations in January 1995.

The facility is to store high-level radioactive waste that will be created when Japan's spent nuclear fuel is reprocessed in Britain and France to produce plutonium.

The waste will be returned to Japan sealed in glass containers.

Under the plan, the waste will be stored underground in a 2,000 square meter reinforced concrete structure with two underground pits that can hold a total of 1,440 glass storage containers.

The facility eventually must be expanded since the amount of waste created will fill more than 4,000 glass containers.

The containers are to be stored for up to 50 years and then disposed of underground.

Since the technology for burying the waste has not yet been determined, local residents have expressed concern that the proposed storage facility might become its final resting place.

At the Rokkasho Nuclear Fuel Recycling Center, Japan Nuclear Fuel Service originally was to operate a nuclear

fuel reprocessing plant, while Japan Nuclear Fuel Industries Corp. was to operate Japan's first large commercial uranium enrichment facility and a storage facility for low-level nuclear waste.

The two companies, however, have applied to the government for permission to merge on July 1 under the name of Japan Nuclear Fuel Co. If the merger is approved the new company will operate all three facilities.

JR East Japan To Test New Shinkansen Train

OW0204105492 Tokyo KYODO in English 1038 GMT 02 Apr 92

[Text] Sendai, April 2 KYODO—East Japan Railway Co. (JR East Japan) will begin two years of tests later this month on what is being hailed as the next generation of Shinkansen bullet trains, railway officials said Thursday.

Data on the test runs of the "Star 21" Shinkansen train will be compiled and analyzed with an eye on 1995, when the wedge-shaped bullet trains are expected to be ready for service on the Tohoku and Joetsu lines.

The Tohoku line links Tokyo with Morioka in northeastern Japan, while Joetsu connects the capital with Niigata on the Sea of Japan coast.

Railway officials expect the new trains will reach 300 kilometers per hour, 60 kph faster than the existing Shinkansen train on the lines, and aim to make the nine-car trains quieter.

At present, the fastest train in Japan is the "Nozomi" superexpress on the Tokaido Shinkansen line between Tokyo and Shin-Osaka, operated by Central Japan Railway Co. (JR Tokai)

According to the testing plan, the Star 21 will continue making test runs on the Tokyo-Sendai section on the Tohoku line until July, and data on the basic performance of the train will be collected at the standard Shinkansen speed of 240 kph.

The new trains will then be tested on the Joetsu line and, with the line's many straight runs, technicians will test the trains' noise levels, safety and brake performance at speeds up to 350 kph.

If the Star 21 can reach 300 kph, the one-hour, 40-minute trip from Tokyo to Sendai can be shortened by 20 minutes, officials said.

The front car of the Star 21 is distinguished by its wedge-shaped nose, and the windows and doors are similar to those used by airliners and therefore able to cut wind resistance, officials said.

Each of the cars is being constructed of a special aluminum alloy, cutting the weight of the cars by about half, which technicians predict will reduce noise and vibrations in the cars.

North Korea

Kim Il-song Interviewed by ASAHI SHIMBUN

SK0304112392 Pyongyang KCNA in English 1047 GMT 92

["President Kim Il-song's Answers to Questions Put by Managing Editor of Japanese Newspaper ASAHI SHIMBUN"—KCNA headline]

[Text] Pyongyang April 3 (KCNA)—The great leader President Kim Il-song answered the questions put by the managing editor of the Japanese newspaper ASAHI SHIMBUN on March 31, 1992.

Follows full text of the answers:

I welcome your visit to our country.

The ASAHI SHIMBUN has carried many good articles about our country. I would like to express my thanks to you for this.

I shall now answer the questions you, the managing editor, have raised.

Question: President Kim Il-song, you who are greeting your 80th birthday before long have led the Korean revolution and made a great contribution to the world revolution for more than 60 years. What are the questions you have felt with the deepest concern in these years?

Answer: As all of you know, I have been struggling for a long time to realize the desire of the popular masses to be free from all manner of subjugation and fetters and lead an independent life. In the course of this, I have had to go through many trials and difficulties and have experienced many happy and painful events that can never be forgotten.

We look back upon the past in order to learn lessons and make further advance. What I would like to say from this point of view is that the people who struggle to realize the independence of the popular masses should naturally pay attention preferentially to raising the level of the people's ideological consciousness of independence.

That man is the master of everything and decides everything is the principle of chuche philosophy we have evolved. Of course, objective conditions and environments have a major effect on shaping a man's destiny, but it is always the man that plays the decisive role. When I say that the man plays the decisive role, I mean in the final analysis that his ideological consciousness plays the decisive role. The importance of developing his creative power in enhancing his role has often been emphasized, but little attention has been given to the fact that his invisible ideological consciousness has more important effect on enhancing his role. A man's creative power is defined by his ideological consciousness. A man can work creatively in keeping with his desire for independence because he has the ideological consciousness of independence. Just as the development of man's creative

power is unlimited, so the development of his ideological consciousness of independence is unlimited.

The popular masses who have become the masters of their state and society after the overthrow of the outmoded, exploitative society must acquire the ideological consciousness of a qualitatively higher level than in the previous period. In the stage of the struggle to overthrow the outmoded social system, it is important to have the idea of opposing exploitation and oppression; after the establishment of the socialist system, it is important not only to oppose exploitation and oppression but also to have the idea of socialist collectivism that enables the masses, with a high degree of consciousness of being the masters of their state and society, to struggle together, cooperating with one another as comrades. When they lack such a high level of ideological consciousness in a socialist society, the popular masses cannot fulfill their responsibility and role as the masters of the state and society, and such a society is as good as a society without its masters.

Burglars may break into a house without its master. Likewise, an anti-socialist current from outside may flow into a society without its masters, and an anti-socialist trend may grow within the society. The fact that socialism has crumbled in some countries which had been following the path of socialism can be explained similarly.

Seeing the unexpected events that have taken place on the international scene over the recent years, we have all the more keenly felt that the ideology is the life-blood of socialist society and that nothing is more important in the revolution and construction than raising the level of the masses' ideological consciousness. The fact that we have been able to build a people-centred socialism in our country in which the socialist ideology has struck root deep in the minds of the people and has been translated into reality, and the fact that our socialism has continued to be strengthened and developed, standing firm in the complex situation, can be explained to be, after all, the result of our having established chuche in ideology and having directed great efforts to the development of the people's ideological consciousness.

Question: President Kim Il-song, you have emphasized the building of an independent, peaceful and prosperous new Asia. What is your opinion of the prospects of peace, security and economic cooperation in Asia?

Answer: To build an independent, peaceful and prosperous new Asia is a common aspiration of the Asian people. In order to realize humanity's common cause of building an independent new world which is free from domination, subjugation, aggression and war, the Asian people must first of all make Asia independent. It is only when they make Asia independent that all the Asian countries can develop rapidly and contribute to the cause of bringing independence to the world.

Asia possesses great potentialities for a rapid development. It is the largest continent in the world and accounts for more than half of the world population. It has abundant natural resources and favourable conditions for the development of the economy and culture. The Asian people are industrious, intelligent and talented. They have a long history as well as rich experience of having created a brilliant culture which has greatly contributed to the development of mankind. They are now on the new road of progress, with the consciousness that they are the masters of their own destiny and are making a great advance in all fields of politics, the economy and culture. If all the Asian people unite and cooperate with one another, mobilize and utilize their favourable conditions and potentialities to the full, they can quickly rehabilitate themselves and successfully build a new Asia where they all lead a happy and prosperous life. It is not accidental that people say that the next century will be the age of Asia.

In Asia there are still many remnants of the old age, the legacy of imperialism. In order to build a new Asia for the Asian peoples, it is necessary to abolish the aggressive military bases and nuclear bases which threaten the peace and security of Asia, put an end to the old order which is beneficial to the imperialists, and reject all forms of domination and interference by the imperialists.

The master of Asia is the Asian peoples. Therefore, the Asian question should be solved to meet the common demand and interests of the Asian peoples. Among the Asian countries there are large and small countries, developed and less developed countries as well as countries with rich natural resources and those which do not have many natural resources. However, all the Asian countries have the possibility to make a distinctive contribution to the building of a new Asia. The point in question is that all of these countries should unite sincerely and cooperate with each other unselfishly for their common prosperity. Such practices as pursuing dominationist demand or treating others unfairly with a sense of national superiority must not be tolerated in the relations between the Asian countries. All the Asian countries should firmly unite and closely cooperate for their common cause, respecting each other and learning from each other on the principle of genuine independence, equality and mutual benefit.

Question: Progress has been witnessed recently in the solution of the nuclear problem on the Korean peninsula. Could you tell me about the stand of the government of your Republic with regard to this problem?

Answer: The nuclear problem on the Korean peninsula has been raised because the United States brought nuclear weapons into South Korea. Being a nuclear-free state, our Republic has invariably maintained that the Korean peninsula should be made a nuclear-free, peace zone; this has already become widely known.

So far as the question of nuclear inspection is concerned, only the matter of formalities remains. This question will be solved smoothly in accordance with the established formalities if the Supreme People's Assembly to be opened several days later deliberates on and approves

the nuclear safeguards accord in conformity with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Our stand with regard to the question of nuclear inspection is clear, and there is no reason to have any doubt about this. However, an attempt is being made to bring disgrace upon the image of our Republic in the international community making a fuss about this question. This cannot be construed otherwise than pursuing an ulterior object. The nuclear power, which actually presents a threat to the existence of mankind, is putting unreasonable pressure upon us, a nuclear-free state, standing in the van. This can be said to be the expression of the haughtiness of those who have got into the habit of imposing upon others their own unilateral will in disregard of the principle of justice and equality in the international relations.

Question: High-level talks have been held between Korea and the United States. How are you going to develop the relations with the U.S.?

Answer: The United States is the very country that is directly responsible for the Korean problem and the question of Korea's reunification is related to the U.S. policy towards Korea. So we have paid attention to improving the Korea-U.S. relations and made efforts to this end. Now that the cold war has come to an end, new circumstances are being created for the improvement of the Korea-U.S. relations. It can be said that now there is neither need nor reason for the United States to insist on its previous fallacious policy towards Korea. In such a situation high-level talks were recently held between Korea and the United States. This has some significant in improving the Korea-U.S. relations; however, it is nothing but a start.

In future we will make continuous efforts to improve the Korea- U.S. relations. It all depends on how the United States will change her policy towards Korea and how active she will be to improve the Korea-U.S. relations. If the United States correctly estimates the changed situation and the current of historical development and changes without hesitation her policy towards Korea in the interests of the American people and in accordance with the aspirations of the peace-loving people the world over, the relations between Korea and the United States will be improved.

Question: Under the condition that the North-South agreement was concluded and became effective, what problems do you think should be solved without fail for achieving the reunification of Korea?

Answer: That "the Agreement on Reconciliation, Nonaggression, Cooperation and Exchange Between the North and the South" was concluded and became effective is an invaluable success attained by the joint efforts of the nation in the struggle for national reunification. The important problem set in settling the matter of our country's reunification now is for the North and the South to fulfill sincerely the North-South agreement in the political, military, economic, cultural and all other sectors and to make positive efforts jointly so that it will be taken over to national reunification.

Fulfilling the North-South agreement is a very important and responsible affair to open the door to national reunification which all our fellow countrymen earnestly wish.

In fulfilling the North-South agreement the duties of the authorities of the North and the South are important. The authorities that assume the heavy responsibility before the nation should carry out the agreement sincerely in accordance with the aspirations and desire of the nation, holding fast to the stand of national independence. Since the authorities swore to the nation to pave the path to national reunification, they must abandon the dependence on foreign forces and the outdated sense of confrontation and endeavour energetically to effect reconciliation and cooperate really on the basis of the spirit of national independence and to settle the question of national reunification in a practical manner. When the matter is arranged this way, the summit meeting between the North and the South will be realized and the bright prospects for achieving national reunification by the method of confederation will be opened.

The reunification of the country is the cause of the entire nation that must be accomplished by our nation as becoming the masters. The basic guarantee for removing all obstacles in the way of the reunification and for opening the door to national reunification is to bring about the great unity of the whole nation. When all our compatriots in the North and the South and abroad make efforts united closely as one on the principles of giving priority to the common interests of the nation and subordinating everything to these interests, they can eliminate the interference of outside forces and all anti-national hindrances and hasten national reunification.

Question: Your Republic has been building socialism in its own way. Would you tell me about the present situation and prospect of socialist construction in your country?

Answer: Our socialism is socialism centring on the masses, the embodiment of the chuche idea.

It is said in general that socialist society is a society free from the exploitation and oppression of man by man and a society in which everyone lives equitably. Of course, this is correct. But that is not all the essential characteristics of socialism. The essential character of socialism is also that it is a society in which the masses of the people are fused in comradeship all as masters of the state and society and lead an independent and creative life in keeping with the nature of social man.

Our socialism which has been built through the application of the chuche idea is characterized in essence by the fact that it is a society in which the masses of the people hold the position of the masters of the state and society and have combined to form a socio-political organism, sharing life and death on the basis of revolutionary

loyalty and comradeship, and in which they realize their desire for independence fully in all fields of politics, the economy and culture.

In our country, a political life, a material life and a cultural life are developing in a balanced manner and, in true sense of a word, everyone is creating and enjoying a socialist life.

Everyone in our country has a steady job according to his ability, works conscientiously for society and for himself and lives equitably without distinctions between rich and poor and free from worries about food, clothing and housing. Thanks to the system of free and compulsory education and the system of free medical care, our people study to their hearts' content, lead a long life in good health and enjoy a rich socialist cultural life. Political life is particularly important in the socialist life of our people. Our people, as masters of political power, exercise genuine political rights and, belonging to a definite socio-political organization, add luster to their valuable socio-political integrity, being loved and trusted by the collective.

Our people are leading an independent life free from all sorts of domination and subjugation both at home and abroad and enjoying a truly decent, happy and worthy life free from poverty, unemployment, worries about living, and social evils. Our people can lead such a socialist life today, because we have built an independent socialist society by implementing the principles of chuche in ideology, independence in politics, self-sufficiency in the economy and self-reliance in national defence.

In order to meet the people's desire for independence to the full, we must continue with socialist construction. We are now paying attention preferentially to strengthening the independent motive force by making all members of society revolutionary, assimilating them to the working class and training them into intellectuals while at the same time pressing on with economic construction for consolidating the material and technical foundations of socialism and raising the people's material and cultural standards as well as the work of improving state and social management by developing socialist democracy. Our party's general line of stepping up the ideological, technical and cultural revolutions while strengthening the people's state power and steadily enhancing its functions and role is the basic way of building socialism successfully by transforming nature, society and man as required by the chuche idea. We firmly believe that only when we hold fast to our party's general line in socialist construction and carry it out to the letter, will we be able to build socialism successfully without any deviation and accomplish the cause of socialism.

Question: What is your view of the problem of normalizing Japan-Korea diplomatic relations and of the prospects for talks between the governments?

Answer: I have already spoken on many occasions about the historic significance of the normalization of diplomatic relations between Korea and Japan and about the matters of principle in realizing it. At present, the talks between two governments for their normalization do not make due progress. It seems that they still lack in the common recognition and understanding about the significance of improving Korea-Japan relations and the matters of principle concerning it.

It is the common desire of the two peoples to liquidate the legacies of the past that have existed between Korea and Japan and to develop good neighbourly, friendly relations; it accords with the trend of the present age towards independence, peace and friendship. Therefore far-sighted politicians have the common understanding about this problem and strive to improve Korea-Japan relations. The joint declaration of the Workers' Party of Korea, Liberal Democratic Party of Japan and Japan Social-Democratic Party resulted from the common understanding and efforts. I think that with the passage of time many more people will acquire a correct understanding about this problem and that the question of normalizing Korea-Japan diplomatic relations will be solved satisfactorily under the support of the broad sections of politicians and people.

I avail myself of this opportunity to send my warm greetings to Japanese politicians and people who are making sincere efforts for the normalization of Korea-Japan diplomatic relations and for friendship between the two countries.

South Korea

Early Nuclear Inspection Through JNCC Sought

SK0304064292 Seoul YONHAP in English 0628 GMT 3 Apr 92

[Text] Seoul, April 3 (YONHAP)—The government has lost interest in pilot inter-Korean inspection of nuclear facilities and will now concentrate on early inspection through the Joint Nuclear Control Commission [JNCC].

The government felt pilot inspection of areas like Yongbyon in the North and Kunsan U.S. Air Force Base in the South would not work due to the growing possibility of the North concealing the Yongbyon nuclear facilites or hiding them elsewhere, a government official said Friday.

Pilot inspection, which the South proposed at the South-North Korean prime ministerial talks last December, was in reality made meaningless by the inauguration of the JNCC last month, he said.

"We now fear that if we insist on pilot inspection, it will only delay full-fledged inspection by the JNCC," he said.

There is an increasing possibility of the North moving key nuclear facilities out of Yongbyon to keep them hidden from inspectors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in June.

The South intended to push for inspection on 24 hours' notice by either side, allowing no time for concealment, he said.

Saying that inspection of the Yongbyon nuclear center alone would not dispel the danger of nuclear arms development by North Korea, he suggested the North's desires could be thwarted only if the special short-notice inspections were realized in addition to regular inspections.

After the second meeting of the JNCC on April 1, Seoul-side Co- chairman Kong No-myong said the South couldn't accept the demand that, in return for inspection of Yongbyon, all U.S. military installations in the South should be laid open to North Korean inspectors.

"We have already offered the North a comprehensive idea on mutual nuclear inspection that the North could easily agree to if only it really meant to denuclearize the Korean peninsula," Kong said.

Seoul reportedly urged, among other things, that up to four suspected nuclear sites be covered by each special inspection and that areas chosen for regular inspection could also be visited on special inspections.

No Tae-u Urges DLP To Choose Candidate Fairly

SK0204130892 Seoul YONHAP in English
0946 GMT 2 Apr 92

[Text] Seoul, April 2 (YONHAP)—President No Tae-u said Thursday his Democratic Liberal Party (DLP) should set an example of selecting a presidential candidate through a fair intra-party contest.

"To select a candidate through competitions has never occurred in a ruling party. We may not succeed 100 percent, but best efforts should be made for the establishment of intra-party democracy," No said in his weekly meeting with Executive Chairman Kim Yong-sam, one of the contenders, Thursday afternoon.

The DLP has decided to hold a national convention on May 19 to choose a presidential candidate. Kim, Rep. Yi Chong-chan, Co- Chairman Pak Tae-chun have expressed intention to run for the nomination.

"As the national convention has been tentatively set for May 19, the party should make detailed endeavor to immediately and reasonably correct the defects of its constitution and regulations concerning the methods of selecting the deputies and electioneering by the candidates," No said.

"It is wrong to see the goodwill competitions among candidates as a factional strife," he said, emphasizing that contenders should draw the support of party members not by slandering others but by suggesting their own philosophy and ideas for the future.

Kim Yong-sam Confident of Winning DLP Nomination

SK0304055592 Seoul YONHAP in English
0247 GMT 3 Apr 92

[Text] Seoul, April 3 (YONHAP)—Kim Yong-sam, executive chairman of the ruling Democratic Party [as received], expressed his firm confidence Friday in winning his party's nomination for president next month.

"I have never thought of defeat," said Kim, who has already announced his candidacy for the party nomination.

"There will be only victory. It has never occurred to me to accept the result of a competition," Kim told Korean newspaper editors at a working breakfast when asked if he would accept defeat in a free contest.

Kim stressed that the DLP presidential candidate must be the one who can beat any opposition candidate, implying that he is the one.

His opponents, who far outnumber his supporters in the DLP, are trying to put up a single challenger for the nomination.

Kim hinted that he has President No Tae-u's support even though the president has said he is strictly impartial in the nomination race.

"President No never used the words 'being neutral' with regard to the nomination. He cannot but be interested in such a grave issue as choosing the ruling party's candidate," he said.

"I would like you to take note of the fact that the president has in effect delegated overall party operation to me."

Because the DLP candidate should be nominated in a festive atmosphere, Kim said, he would work together with No very closely on the nominating convention, slated for May 19.

"If it is necessary to ensure a festive convention, I am willing to meet with any other contender," he said.

"No politician should meddle in the economy, and no businessmen should step in politics," he said.

Asked about charges of absentee voting irregularities in some military units and a smear campaign perpetrated by intelligence agents in the general elections, Kim said there should be no recurrence of the incidents for the sake of political development.

"I will see to it the incidents are thoroughly investigated and any findings reported to the people," he said.

Before answering questions at the breakfast, held at the press center, Kim gave a speech on the concept of political leaders of Korea on the threshold of the 21st century.

Kim said the nation needed as a political leader a decisive and democratic figure able to convert the cold-war system and ideology into a democratic mechanism.

"A political leader should also be free of any moral defects and be able to make civilian-led democratic politics take root in the land," Kim said.

DP Urges Special Session on Vote-Rigging

SK0204131492 Seoul YONHAP in English
1031 GMT 2 Apr 92

[Text] Seoul, April 2 (YONHAP)—The main opposition Democratic Party [DP] called Thursday for the National Assembly Defense, Home Affairs, Economy and Science, Finance, Trade and Industry, and Foreign Affairs and Unification Committees to be convened.

The DP issued its call after the ruling Democratic Liberal Party (DLP) refused to call a special parliamentary session to deal with allegations of vote-rigging in military units during the March 24 general elections and issues related to the inter-Korean reconciliation agreement.

"Our call is not a political offensive and the DP's position is that issues worth being talked about should be talked about," DP Co-Chairman Kim Tae-chung said.

It would be meaningless to convene a session without the DLP, he added.

Acting DP floor leader Kim Tok-kyu proposed, in a telephone conversation earlier in the day with his DLP counterpart, Yi Cha-hon, that the National Assembly be called into a special session in view of a mountain of pending issues.

Yi refused to accept the proposal, saying that there was no precedent for the parliament to sit after new lawmakers had been elected and a majority of incumbent lawmakers had lost their seats.

Defense Minister Denies Charges of Voting Abuses

SK0304111192 Seoul YONHAP in English
1041 GMT 3 Apr 92

[Text] Seoul, April 3 (YONHAP)—Defense Minister Choe Sae-chang officially denied Friday charges that military officers had pressured soldiers to vote for the ruling party in the 14th general elections. In a press conference winding up a 10-day investigation of the alleged vote rigging at barracks, Choe said, "I feel terribly sorry for the stir caused at some units in connection with the 14th general elections.

"Our armed forces conducted the absentee voting in accordance with the law under a common resolution to conduct the voting in a fairer manner than any other time. However, for all these efforts, to our regret, since First Lt. Yi Chi-mun's allegation was made public, the Citizens' Coalition for Fair Elections and mass media reports have raised shocking issues of open and stand-in voting and charges that some officers forced soldiers to vote for the ruling party," he said.

He said all those allegations were "groundless" and that the forces did not have the letter-censoring machine which Lt. Yi referred to during his press meet.

Lt. Yi, 24, a member of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC), told a press meet on March 22, two days before the general elections that soldiers at the headquarters company voted in an open ballot in front of their master sergeant in charge of personnel affairs.

He said the soldiers were told that the ruling party must get at least 80 percent of the votes and that they should vote for President No Tae-u's party as the president was the supreme commander of the armed forces.

He said the soldiers were also told that the election results, which could be checked by a letter-censoring machine, would be reflected in their performance merit reports around April 10.

"It is not true that the armed forces intervened organically in the elections this time," Choe said, admitting that some officers had been confirmed to have made "some remarks that may cause misunderstanding, as in the case of the spiritual education of the Air Force anti-aircraft artillery commander."

"I will mobilize all investigative power entrusted to me as a defense minister for thorough investigation as soon as my Ministry receives related reports concerning the allegations made so far. Stern punishment will be taken against people who are confirmed to have engaged in election fraud, regardless of their ranks," he said.

He said the system of absentee voting could be revised in a way preventing distrust and misunderstanding concerning voting at barracks.

"At units in the rear, the voting may take place outside barracks. At frontline units, observers from the Central Election Management Committee may overlook the process. We can even think of legislating a system under which voting rights are reserved during the military service, as in some South American countries.

"If the Central Election Management Committee or the legislature closely looks into these possibilities and sets up a sure system, the armed forces will sincerely abide by it. We will also improve the spiritual education in such a way as to prevent breeding misunderstanding over the political neutrality of the armed forces."

Some 560,000 soldiers voted from March 16-23 in absentee ballots for the March 24 elections.

The Army also announced a similar denial of Lt. Yi's allegations Friday, saying most of them lacked evidences.

"Common sense denies allegations about open balloting and officers' interference with voting, when the fact that 98.5 percent of the enlisted men have high school or higher education. The military units did not and do not have letter-censoring machines," an Army spokesman said.

The spokesman said a special military probe team had investigated first Lt. Yi and 18 other officers and 24 soldiers.

Yi was whisked away by men from the Capital Defense Command at the end of the press conference on March 22. He is in the custody of the military police of the 9th Army Division on a charge of having been absent without leave.

The court-martial of the 9th Army Division turned down a plea for a review of the legality of Yi's arrest on Friday.

The major opposition Democratic Party said the minister's denial reflected that President No's government "was not yet aware of the seriousness of this incident."

Spokesman Chang Sok-hwa said the minister's mentioning of a system under which voting rights could be reserved during military service period ran counter to the Constitution as it would mean limiting the people's right to suffrage.

UN Sanctions To 'Hardly Affect' Libyan Trade

SK0304054792 Seoul YONHAP in English 0405 GMT 3 Apr 92

[Text] Seoul, April 3 (YONHAP)—Businessmen here say the U.N. sanctions will hardly affect their trade with Libya.

"Unless the sanction escalates to a total trade embargo or an attack, we don't think it will affect exports of ordinary commodities to Libya," a businessman said Friday. The U.N. Security Council has imposed an air and arms embargo.

"Although the United States is enforcing a trade blockade, routine trade won't be affected because there is a duty-free customs clearance zone on Libya's border with Egypt," an official of Samsung Co. said.

Because the United States has frozen its assets, Libya will have considerable foreign exchange shortages and be slow to open letters of credit.

An official of Daewoo Corp. said that although the sanctions would not have any particular impact on the exports of routine commodities to Libya, Korean contractors would suffer significant damage due to delays in settlement caused by the foreign exchange shortage if the sanctions were prolonged.

Korea had exports of 170 million U.S. dollars to Libya last year and imports of 140 million dollars. Goods shipped to Libya were largely textiles, electronic and electric appliances, machinery and steel products, while imports were crude oil and oil products.

Since the turn of the year, exports to Libya have been rising steadily. Shipment of steel and metal products increased 443 percent in the first two months over the like period last year.

In Libya, Dong-ah Construction Industrial Co. and several other Korean contractors are working on the great man-made waterway project and other projects totaling 19.5 billion dollars, of which 7.5 billion dollars remains to be paid.

Construction Industry Hardest Hit

SK0304025392 Seoul THE KOREA TIMES in English 3 Apr 92 p 8

[By staff Reporter Sa Tong-sok]

[Text] The government and business are grappling with the economic fallout created by the United Nations decision to slap trade and diplomatic sanctions against Libya.

The sanctions, due to go into force on April 15, will likely cast dark clouds over extensive areas of the Korean economy, ranging from trade to overseas construction.

The safety of Korean workers in Libya is also emerging as an imminent problem that the government has to tackle, out of the assumption that the smouldering crisis may escalate into an armed conflict.

Considered to be hardest hit by the latest crisis in Libya is Korea's overseas construction industry, which has relied heavily on construction orders placed by Libya and other Middle East countries over the past few decades.

Korean contractors' worry about the latest developments is being heightened as Libya has emerged as the largest construction market for Korea in recent years.

Analysts believe that the Libyan government appears certain to put off much of its projected construction orders in the teeth of the growing political unrest.

Hyundai Engineering and Construction Co. was reportedly close to winning a 1.8-billion-dollar contract to build a thermal power plant in Libya but the recent development is believed to be setting up a stumbling block to Hyundai's smooth business activities.

Dong-Ah Construction Ind. Co., which has received mammoth waterway projects worth over 10 billion dollars on two occasions in the past, is also worried about the situation.

The Libyan government was scheduled to put up subsequent phases of the Great Man-made River project for international bidding late this year or early next year but may delay the bidding, an official at the Construction Ministry said. Dong-Ah is the strongest contender for the subsequent phases.

In addition, several projects, small or large, have been pencilled on Korean contractors' order sheets but the crisis puts their bids in jeopardy.

The U.N. sanctions are expected to immediately cause construction works being undertaken by Korean overseas builders trouble as the supply of new workers and materials will be slowed in the wake of the air embargo.

At present, three Korean construction companies—Hyundai, Dong-Ah, Daewoo—are engaged in construction work worth 11.5 billion dollars. The remaining work is valued at 5.9 billion dollars.

Korean construction workers in Libya number about 4,000 along with 9,500 foreign workers.

The Construction Ministry and businesses don't expect the latest Libyan crisis to escalate into an armed conflict and view it as unnecessary to evacuate workers from Libya. But they look busy mapping out contingency plans in preparation for the worst.

"At the present moment, we don't see the crisis develop into a total bombing of Libya but the evacuation of workers will be undertaken in the extreme situation," Pak Song-pyo, director of overseas construction division at the Construction Ministry, said.

Once flights between Seoul and Tripoli are cut off after the U.N.-imposed deadline of April 15, the ministry envisages transporting manpower and materials to Tunisia via air routes and then carrying them by land to Libya.

The greater emphasis is placed on securing the safety of Korean and foreign workers and thus businesses are drawing up emergency plans on the assumption that work in Libya will be suspended.

The impact on Korea's trade with Libya seems trifling in comparison with the profound effects on the construction sector since bilateral trade is small.

Korea exported about 170 million dollars worth of goods to Libya last year while importing 140 million dollars from the North African country. Korea doesn't import oil from Libya.

There are branch offices of several Korean general trading companies in Tripoli and they are also preparing for the worst.

The Korea Trade Promotion Corp. predicts that Korean exports to Libya will be trimmed by 100 million dollars this year if the sanctions continue.

Measures Implemented for Workers

SK0304045292 Seoul YONHAP in English 0417 GMT 3 Apr 92

[Text] Seoul, April 3 (YONHAP)—The government has worked out measures to protect Korean construction workers in Libya and to minimize possible business losses if military action takes place as part of U.N. sanctions against the northern African country.

The Construction Ministry said Friday it had come up with a three-stage plan as the U.N. sanctions take effect April 15.

In the first stage, it said, the government would concentrate on reassuring Korean workers taking part in construction projects in Libya of their safety.

The government will stop sending additional workers to Libya and help withdraw non-essential personnel and reduce the number of Korean managers there. In addition, it will secure food and other daily necessities as well as tents and medicines ahead of any possible military action against Libya.

The government will also help companies stockpile construction materials such as cement, steel and heavy machinery, officials said.

In the second stage, which begins on April 15, the government will help direct the formation of a task force by five Korean construction companies, including Tonga, Hyundai, Daewoo and Samsung.

The Korean companies would reduce their operations drastically if the U.N. sanctions were protracted and companies from Japan and Western countries that were providing technological and managerial support for the Libyan projects withdrew.

If the construction projects were suspended and there were surplus manpower and machinery, the government would help withdraw them in stages. It will negotiate with the Libyan Government for exit visas, study the mobilization of land, sea and air transportation for withdrawals and possible sites for concentration of Korean workers and routes for their departure.

In the third stage, if the situation becomes worse and the United Nations imposes naval and land blockades against Libya, the government will notify the project ordering party that Korean companies are unable to carry out their contracts and will take all necessary legal steps.

The government also decided that it will not allow Korean companies to take part in the construction of military installations if and when there is military action against Libya, they said.

Brunei, Malaysia & Singapore

Malaysia

Annual Report Details 1991 Economic Growth

BK0204131292 Kuala Lumpur NEW STRAITS TIMES in English 31 Mar 92 p 13

[Text] The Malaysian economy recorded yet another buoyant year in 1991 with a creditable growth rate of 8.8 percent driven primarily by private investment in the manufacturing sector.

The report says this 8.8 percent in real gross domestic product (GDP), which represented the fifth consecutive year of economic expansion, accompanied a sharp drop in the unemployment rate to 5.6 percent.

In line with the sustained growth in GDP, The nominal gross national product (GNP) rose by 12.4 percent (15.3 percent in 1990).

The report says the nominal per capita income increased by 9.9 percent to $6,817 in 1991, equivalent to about US$2,500 (1990: 12.7 percent to $6,206).

Growth in private sector expenditure moderated from 17 percent to 14.9 percent in 1991, reflecting slower growth in both private consumption and investment.

In real terms, private investment outlays moderated to 23 percent while the pace of private consumer spending slowed down to 11.6 percent, compared with 24.8 percent and 13.6 percent respectively in 1990.

On the other hand, public sector expenditure increased further by 10.8 percent in 1991 (1990: 11.5 percent).

This was mainly on account of rising public consumption which increased by 9.6 percent (1990: 6.5 percent), reflecting higher Government expenditure on supplies and services as well as higher emoluments following the civil service salary revision.

The report says the growth in public investment, however, moderated to 12.2 percent in 1991 in the wake of sharp increases of 34.3 percent and 17.1 percent in 1989 and 1990 respectively.

On the supply side, the manufacturing, construction and services sectors continued to lead overall output growth, all of which registered strong double digit growth but at a more moderate pace during the year.

Almost all industries, except for the off-estate processing industry, recorded higher output. At the same time, a group of new manufacturers is fast emerging and expanding rapidly in terms of output growth.

This situation arose from the surge in foreign investment evident since 1988 and the implementation of new projects over the last two years. However, these new industries which include, among others, enterprises involved in the production of selected household electrical appliances, games and toys, were not captured in the new Index of Manufacturing Production.

The services sector registered a growth rate of 10.5 percent, mainly owing to higher growth in the wholesale and retail trade, hotels and restaurants, and the financial services sub-sectors.

The overall balance of payments position registered a surplus of $3.4 billion in 1991 ($5.4 billion in 1990), resulting in an equivalent increase in the international reserves of the central bank to $30.4 billion by the end of 1991, sufficient to finance about 3.6 months of retained imports.

At the end of 1991, the ringgit recorded a mixed performance and in terms of the composite basket, depreciated by 2.9 percent from its end-1990 level.

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) rose by 4.4 percent during 1991 (3.1 percent) in 1990 and could well have been higher if not for lower international inflation which reduced imported inflation in Malaysia.

The employment situation improved further in 1991 with official estimates showing a decline in unemployment from six percent in 1990 to 5.6 percent last year.

The overall financial position of the Federal Government remained favourable in 1991 with Federal revenue rising by a further 14.6 percent to reach $33.8 billion.

Central Bank Reports on 1991 Monetary Policy

BK3003100692 Kuala Lumpur Voice of Malaysia in English 0800 GMT 30 Mar 92

[Text] Malaysia's monetary policy this year will continue to be tight. This follows the recent strong inflow of funds from abroad. Besides, there is an expected favorable real gross domestic product growth of 8.7 percent.

The governor of Bank Negara, the Central Bank, Tan Sri Jaafar Hussein, says emphasis will continue to be placed on (?attaining) savings and moderating inflation. At the same time, adequate liquidity will be made available to finance the productive requirements of the economy. Growth will be achieved by the strength of sustained expansion in domestic demand, particularly as private investment proposals approved in 1990-91 come on stream.

He was speaking at the presentation of the central bank's annual report for 1991. Tan Sri Jaafar said Malaysia's export performance this year is expected to be better than indicated by the growth of economic activity in the Group of Seven nations and world trade. This is because of the country's rapidly changing structure of exports and diversification of markets.

Cambodia

Son Sen Addresses 1 Apr SNC Meeting

BK0304063392 (Clandestine) Voice of the Great National Union Front of Cambodia in Cambodian 2330 GMT 2 Apr 92

["Speech by Son Sen, member of the Supreme National Council, at the meeting of the Supreme National Council on 1 April 1992" in Phnom Penh—read by announcer]

[Text] Respected prince head of state and chairman of the Supreme National Council [SNC]; Your Excellency Yasushi Akashi, special representative of the UN secretary general; Your Excellency General John Sanderson, supreme commander of the UN Armed Forces in Cambodia; their excellencies; ladies and gentlemen:

I would like to ask the prince head of state and SNC chairman to allow me to (?explain) to Your Highness; His Excellency Yasushi Akashi, special representative of the UN secretary general; and all members of the SNC on the fundamental points of the Paris agreement on Cambodia, that is Article 6 of Annex 2 which deals with the supervision of the withdrawal of all categories of foreign forces from Cambodia and their non-return, and Article 8 of the agreement which deals with the withdrawal of foreign forces and the supervision of the withdrawal of foreign forces.

This Article 8 states that once the agreement goes into effect, all categories of foreign forces, foreign advisers, and foreign military personnel in Cambodia, together with their arms, ammunition, and materiel, must be withdrawn immediately from Cambodia and must not be allowed to return. This withdrawal and non-return must be under the supervision of the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia [UNTAC] in line with Annex 2.

Article 6 of Annex 2 states:

1. Information on the withdrawal of foreign forces must be reported in writing to the UNTAC within two weeks prior to the beginning of the second phase at the latest. This information must (?mention the following points):

A. The total number of these forces and their organization and deployment.

B. A clear list of (?forces and their) arms, ammunition, and materiel.

C. Plans which emphasize roads, border passes, and the time of the withdrawal from Cambodia. These plans include the ones which were already carried out and those to be carried out further.

2. Based on the information from all points mentioned in item 1 above, the UNTAC must carry out observation work through whichever methods it sees fit. The parties concerned with providing the abovementioned information must give information to the UN observation officials on the personnel [words indistinct].

3. In the observation, if it is found out that there are foreign forces, the UNTAC must send military personnel to the place where those foreign forces are found and (?send) them out of Cambodia.

The UNTAC (?must deploy) supervision personnel along the routes through which these forces are to be withdrawn, passes that they must get through, and at the airport, so as to oversee the total withdrawal of all categories of foreign forces from Cambodia and ensure that they do not return to Cambodia.

4. The joint working group as mentioned in Article 2 of this annex must assist the UNTAC in fulfilling the abovementioned tasks.

The abovementioned fundamental points clearly prove that:

First, when the Paris agreement was signed on 23 October 1991, foreign forces had not yet been withdrawn totally from Cambodia. This is because Article 8 clearly states that all these foreign forces and foreign military advisers who are still in Cambodia must be under the supervision of the UNTAC in line with Annex 2. This means that (?they are) still in Cambodia.

Second, the only party to provide the abovementioned information [words indistinct] Article 6 of Annex 2 is Vietnam. This is because Vietnam is the only party involved in the Cambodian conflict and a signatory to the Paris agreement which has all of this information.

Third, the other parties involved in the conflict, particularly the three parties of the Cambodian national resistance forces, cannot provide all the information about all categories of forces which are [words indistinct] foreign forces, foreign advisers, and foreign military personnel, together with arms, ammunition, and materiel (?which are still in) Cambodia.

(?That after) 23 October 1991, the signing day of the Paris agreement, the Cambodian parties must provide all the information, is not in line with the spirit and essence of the agreement with regard to wisdom and (?honesty).

Allow me to recall that H.E. Khieu Samphan had already informed UN Secretary General H.E. Butrus Ghali on this most important matter in his letter dated 25 February 1992.

For this reason, I would like to call on your highness to please allow me to propose that H.E. Yasushi Akashi, special envoy of the UN secretary general, work out all kinds of measures with Vietnam—the state involved in the Cambodian conflict and the signatory of the Paris agreement—so that Vietnam will quickly provide all the information defined in Article 6 of Annex 2.

It is necessary to have all of this information so that the Paris agreement can be implemented successfully. This information should include the troop withdrawal plans carried out in September 1989 and to be carried out

further so as to withdraw all Vietnamese forces—either regular or any other forces—which are still in Cambodia.

Also in this spirit, I would like to call on H.E. Yasushi Akashi and H.E. Gen. John Sanderson, commander of the peacekeeping forces in Cambodia, to please pay particular attention on the important issue of setting up checkpoints in Cambodia.

It is clearly stated in Phrase 3, Article 6 of Annex 2 that the UNTAC will set up checkpoints along the roads that these forces are to be withdrawn, at border passes through which these forces will withdraw, and at the airport so as to oversee the withdrawal of all categories of foreign forces and ensure that they are not sent back. [words indistinct] withdrawal of foreign forces and non-return of foreign forces to Cambodia.

[words indistinct] my letter dated 26 March 1992 to Their Excellencies Yasushi Akashi and General John Sanderson proposing the setting up of checkpoints along the Cambodian-Vietnamese border and along the Cambodian coasts. As for the setting up of checkpoints along the Cambodian-Thai border as proposed by the UN secretary general in his report dated 18 February 1992, we have no objection.

Moreover, we would like to propose that at all UNTAC checkpoints, representatives of the four Cambodian parties should be deployed together with the UNTAC members as an indispensable participation in the supervision as defined in Article 6, (?Phrase) 4, of Annex 2, in addition to the above supervision work.

Another major issue is that two or three company units of the UNTAC should be deployed in Phnom Penh in order to ensure security and a neutral political atmosphere which are indispensable, (?security) in the capital which houses the SNC and UNTAC.

Concerning this supervision issue, the prince head of state and SNC chairman has all along paid his greatest attention to [words indistinct] since the time this issue was raised at the conference held in Paris in August 1989.

Please, Your Highness, allow me to once again express my deepest gratitude to you, the prince head of state and SNC chairman.

I would like also to express profound thanks to Their Excellencies Yasushi Akashi and General John Sanderson who promised to pay thorough attention to the supervision on the total withdrawal of all categories of foreign forces from Cambodia. This is because, whether the implementation of the Paris agreement can be carried out or not, it depends on the settlement of this matter.

Once again, I would like to thank H.E. Yasushi Akashi, special representative of the UN secretary general, for arranging and [words indistinct] the coming election in Cambodia.

The party of Democratic Kampuchea will examine this draft attentively. If we have any views, we will propose them to the SNC and the prince head of state and SNC chairman so as to take part in (?bringing success to) the election which involves Cambodia's future.

[words indistinct] so as to bring peace, independence, and territorial integrity back to Cambodia through the correct implementlation of the Paris agreement in its entirety.

The Cambodian people and international community fully recognize the historic role of the prince in his lofty patriotic mission which is very vital to our nation.

'Final Communique' of Meeting

BK0204143892 Phnom Penh Samleng Pracheachon Kampuchea Radio Network in Cambodian 1300 GMT 2 Apr 92

["Final communique" of the 1 April meeting of the Cambodian Supreme National Council—read by announcer]

[Text] The Supreme National Council [SNC] held its meeting at the Khemarin Palace on 1 April 1992 under the august chairmanship of His Royal Highness [HRH] Prince Norodom Sihanouk, head of state and chairman of the SNC of Cambodia, and with the participation of Mr. Yasushi Akashi, special representative of the UN secretary general and head of the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia [UNTAC]. Also attending the meeting were representatives of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council; representatives of Indonesia, cochairman of the Paris conference on Cambodia; and a number of observers.

1. On the study of latest developments: The SNC and UNTAC studied the latest developments of the situation in Cambodia and expressed satisfaction with the improvement of the military situation in all of the country and most particularly the cease-fire in the Kompong Thom area. Mr. Yasushi Akashi announced the departure to Kompong Thom Province by a fact-finding team of UNTAC in preparation for the forthcoming deployment of its military forces in that region.

The SNC and UNTAC also expressed satisfaction with the start of the repatriation of Cambodian refugees. The SNC members recalled the fundamental principle of free choice of their final destination in Cambodia and reaffirmed that all Cambodian refugees and war refugees who return to the motherland shall not be subject to any corporal punishment, detention, oppressive measures, or discrimination based on their reasons for leaving or their status as refugees or war refugees, or their activities or political affiliations that do not infringe on the fundamental principles of international law.

Mr. Yasushi Akashi informed the SNC members of the arrival of a fairly large number of military and civilian UNTAC personnel before the end of April 1992.

2. On the draft election law: The SNC members were presented with the draft election law so they could examine, discuss, and adopt it during the next meeting of the SNC.

3. On the establishment of contacts and communications with the offices of the different Cambodian factions: To improve contacts and communications between UNTAC and the Cambodian factions, it was decided to establish direct liaison between the UNTAC command and the offices of the factions. The initial stage of this mission began on 1 April 1992.

4. On the work procedures of the SNC: HRH Prince Norodom Sihanouk, chairman of the SNC, agreed with the SNC on the work procedures as proposed by Mr. Yasushi Akashi, aimed at establishing a technical consultative committee to facilitate the work of the SNC.

5. On miscellaneous issues: Mr. Yasushi Akashi announced the UN secretary general's intention to take part in the ceremony to admit Cambodia, as represented by the SNC, on the one hand to the international convention on civil and political laws and, on the other hand, to the convention on economic, social, and cultural laws.

The special representative of the UN secretary general appealed to the host country to wholeheartedly help provide as much as it can all necessary conditions to enable UNTAC to operate smoothly.

In the end, Mr. Son Sann, Son Sen, and Mr. Hor Namhong expressed their views on various problems concerning the military compromise and respect for human rights. The SNC will hold its next meeting on 6 April 1992.

PDK Claims Phnom Penh, SRV Break Cease-Fire

BK0304114192 (Clandestine) Voice of the Great National Union Front of Cambodia in Cambodian 2330 GMT 2 Apr 92

[Unattributed commentary: "The Facts About Who has Violated the Kompong Thom Cease-Fire are Becoming Clearer"]

[Text] 1. In January and February 1992, the armed forces of the Phnom Penh faction violated the cease-fire as their troops attacked the Cambodian national resistance to wrest back control of the liberated zone, especially the villages of the Party of Democratic Kampuchea [PDK]. Several high-ranking UN officials made that revelation and international news agencies such Agence France-Press and Associated Press cited it. The Phnom Penh news agency also carried similar remarks made on 3 March 1992 by General Loridon, head of the UN Advance Mission in Cambodia. The Phnom Penh faction's news agency quoted Gen. Loridon as follows: The forces of the Phnom Penh faction seized villages along Route 6 west of Kompong Thom in January, following fierce fighting which forced some 20,000 civilians to flee their hamlets. Fighting again erupted on 17 February. According to Gen. Loridon, the Khmer Rouge launched a counter-attack to recapture these villages.

According to Gen. Loridon's remarks, it is evident that the PDK was compelled to retaliate only to keep and protect the villages they had liberated earlier.

2. According to well informed sources, in a report, Gen. John Sanderson, the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia military chief, described a number of important incidents in Kompong Thom. He said the National Army of Independent Cambodia [NAIC] and the army of the Khmer People's National Liberation Front presented reports on artillery shellings of their Kompong Thom positions from 19 to 20 March. The forces of the Phnom Penh faction fired artillery rounds on Phum Dong, Phum Krabau, and Phum Don Ta-ek. These artillery pieces were based at Stoung and Phum Pralay near Route 6. According to the reports, some 50 persons were killed and 62 others wounded. The Phnom Penh forces fired 105-mm artillery shells and BM-21 and BM-16 rockets. It was also reported that the Phnom Penh troops were disguised in NAIC uniforms to infiltrate into that area. The reports added that at dawn on 25 March, Phnom Penh forces sent truckloads of reinforcement to Phum Pralay with multiple rocket launchers in tow. A few hours later, rockets were fired from Phum Chheuteal onto Phum Dong and Phum Krabau, causing a number of civilian deaths. About one hour later, the first contingent of Phnom Penh reinforcement troops who had earlier reached Phum Pralay went on to Phum Krabau and Phum Dong. Later, in the same afternoon, they fired 85-mm artillery rounds and BM-21 multiple rockets from Phum Banteay Stoung and 130-mm artillery rounds from Phum Chheuteal again at Phum Krabau and Phum Dong.

These are further evidence that Phnom Penh troops and the Vietnamese aggressors behind them are the ones who are responsible for violating the cease-fire and who have refused to implement the 23 October 1991 Paris agreement. In their campaign to seize the liberated villages from the Cambodian national resistance and the PDK, not only did Vietnam and the Phnom Penh faction use the Kompong Thom provincial forces and A-5 guerrillas based on the Kompong Thom battlefield, they also mobilized forces from other regions. For instance, Division 7 was dispatched from Phnom Penh; Division 9 from the 4th Military Region, Siem Reap Province; forces from the 2d Military Region, Kompong Cham Province; forces from the 1st Military Region, Stung Treng Province; the Prey Veng provincial forces; the Svay Rieng provincial forces; the Preah Vihear provincial forces; and the Kandal provincial forces.

The forces used by Vietnam and the Phnom Penh faction in Kompong Thom show without any ambiguity who have really violated the cease- fire and the 23 October 1991 Paris agreement.

194 UN Troopers Dispatched to Kompong Thom

BK0204125292 Jakarta Radio Republik Indonesia Network in Indonesian 1200 GMT 2 Apr 92

[Text] The UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia [UNTAC] today dispatched 194 Indonesian troopers grouped in the UN peacekeeping force to Kompong Thom Province, where the Cambodian Government and Khmer Rouge forces were involved in armed clashes despite the cease-fire. UNTAC Commander Lieutenant General John Sanderson said the Indonesian contingent had arrived in Kompong Thom this evening. The UNTAC commander will also inspect the area soon.

Australian Threat To Withdraw Troops Berated

BK0304104892 Hong Kong AFP in English 0934 GMT 3 Apr 92

[Text] Phnom Penh, April 3 (AFP)—Phnom Penh Premier Hun Sen returned home from overseas Friday critical of Australia, which has said it may withdraw its peacekeeping troops if hostilities continued in this still-unstable country.

"For what purpose do you send your troops here?" he asked, raising his voice at an airport news conference.

"I think they are here to help to put an end to the war, because the country has been at war. That's why you are here," Hun Sen said.

"If we already had peace we would have invited you to come here as tourists, not a peacekeeping force," he said.

Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating said Wednesday that 495 Australian soldiers would be withdrawn from Cambodia if the peace settlement broke down following reports of fighting in the center of the country.

The prime minister spent two weeks in Tokyo and Washington to seek funding for the United Nations peacekeeping operation here. He also stopped in Paris on his return trip.

In Washington, Hun Sen met lawmakers and State Department officials in his first trip to the country that has never recognized his government.

He said he felt his trip was successful, noting moves in the U.S. Congress to appropriate 200 million dollars for the peacekeeping effort.

"They needed to hear my explanation of the situation," he said.

"In a way it (the trip) has been a success because just a few weeks earlier there had been some reluctance" to grant the money, he said. "Of course it was up to the U.S. Congress to make the decision. I only contributed to explaining the whole reason for them."

In Tokyo, the prime minister urged Japanese officials to allow military forces to join the peacekeeping effort. Japan's Constitution prohibits the deployment of Japanese military forces abroad.

"We only ask Japan to play a larger role in the international affairs of the world, starting with Cambodia," he said. "I am not proposing that Japan send its army to aggress in Cambodia like it did in 1945, but if Japan would like to take part in this operation, it is under the auspices of the United Nations."

Prince Sihanouk Welcomes Repatriated Refugees

BK0204095992 Phnom Penh Samleng Pracheachon Kampuchea Radio Network in Cambodian 1300 GMT 31 Mar 92

[Speech by His Royal Highness Prince Norodom Sihanouk at 30 March ceremony in Banteay Meanchey Province to welcome first group of Cambodian refugees repatriated from Thailand—recorded]

[Text] I would like to salute with highest respects and greatest love all venerable monks, including the venerable abbots, present here. My respects to all excellencies, madames, gentlemen, ladies, misses, grandmothers, grandfathers, uncles, aunts, brothers, sisters, children, and grandchildren whom Samdech Euv [Prince Father] and Samdech Me [Princess Mother] miss and love very much.

First of all, Samdech Euv would like to pay respects to grandmothers, grandfathers, uncles, aunts, brothers, sisters, children, grandchildren, and all compatriots whom Samdech Euv and Samdech Me love and miss very much.

Today, Samdech Euv and Samdech Me are very lucky and honored to be able to meet all children and grandchildren in Battambang and Banteay Meanchey Provinces, and particularly the hundreds of, the nearly 600, children and grandchildren who have returned from the Kingdom of Thailand to rebuild their lives as full-fledged citizens of our independent and peaceful Cambodia, to rally now and in the future within the great family of our Cambodia, our motherland. Therefore, I would like to take this auspicious occasion to extend best wishes and the warmest welcome full of greatest love to the nearly 600 children and grandchildren who have voluntarily returned from the Kingdom of Thailand to join our great family as in the past, as in Samdech Euv's era prior to the war, when we lived together and shared weal and woe with each other in our motherland, this Cambodia. We will join hands in defending our new national independence and peace and building and making our country prosperous again.

Therefore, I would like to take this auspicious occasion to first, express deepest thanks to all children and grandchildren in Battambang, Banteay Meanchey, Oddar Meanchey, and other provinces for joyfully and wholeheartedly welcoming, together with me, our compatriots, children, and grandchildren who have returned from the Kingdom of Thailand to live with us in our

independent Cambodia; and second, extend deep thanks and warm commendations to grandmothers, grandfathers, uncles, aunts, brothers, sisters, children, and grandchildren who have returned from various refugee camps in the Kingdom of Thailand for their love for our nation, our motherland, and for not forgetting our nation, our motherland.

Now you must have known that our country must reconcile and avoid any further war. This is to be done in line with the historic agreement signed in Paris on 23 October 1991. Knowing this, all children and grandchildren who have the greatest love for the motherland have volunteered to return to join with me and all our compatriots inside Cambodia to firmly strengthen and expand our national position as an independent, immortal state.

Now, I would also like to take this opportunity to extend deepest thanks and warmest commendation to Mrs. Ogata, head of the High Commissioner, for very splendidly arranging the successive repatriations of children and grandchildren from the Kingdom of Thailand.

Particularly, I would like to extend commendation and deepest gratitude to His Excellency [H.E.] Vieira de Mello and his outstanding colleagues who have made great efforts day and night working, with me as well, to arrange all kinds of utilities, supplies, and means for administering and improving the lives of children and grandchildren who have returned now and will be repatriated in the months to come.

I would also like to express many thanks and commendation to the State of Cambodia [SOC] and the SOC's Red Cross, with Their Excellencies Phlek Phirun and Mi Samedi as its lofty and splendid representatives; to the authorities in Battambang, Banteay Meanchey, and other provinces that will host the children and grandchildren returning from the Kingdom of Thailand; to all other [words indistinct] organizations; and to all generous Cambodian and foreign personages.

The international organizations, particularly the World Food Program, UNICEF, and ICRC have given us great help. Other international organizations are [word indistinct], COERR, Christian Outreach, and JVC [the Japan International Volunteer Center].

I would like once again to thank H.E. Vieira de Mello and the UNHCR as well as the SOC for arranging the centers for receiving the repatriated compatriots. There are six big centers in various provinces in the SOC. There are about 370,000 refugees who have volunteered to return home.

I would like also to express deepest respects to Their Majesties the King and Queen of Thailand who, for the past several years consecutively, have kindly given all kinds of support and assistance to my compatriots, who have stayed for many years in the Kingdom of Thailand under the generous support of Their Majesties the King and Queen and Her Royal Highness Princess Maha Chakkri Sirinthon. My children and grandchildren who used to live in the Kingdom of Thailand have not lost their characteristics as Cambodians who have good traditions and culture as pure Cambodians.

I would also like to express deep thanks to the people of the Kingdom of Thailand, Royal Thai Government, the victorious Armed Forces of the Kingdom of Thailand, Their Excellencies Chaowalit Yongchaiyut and Suchinda Khraprayun, the Thai Red Cross, and to the generous organizations, associations, personages, and citizens of the Kingdom of Thailand for giving, in the past several years, all kinds of support and assistance to my hundreds of thousands of compatriots staying under the shade of the Kingdom of Thailand.

I would like also to express profound gratitude to the international organizations and associations and foreign personages living in the Kingdom of Thailand for kindly giving all kinds of support and assistance to my compatriots staying under the shade of the Kingdom of Thailand.

My deepest and wholehearted thanks to the Armed Forces of the Kingdom of Thailand, which are courageously and kindly striving to eliminate mines from our Cambodian soil and reconstructing roads for Cambodia.

My wholehearted thanks to the Armed Forces of other friendly countries, friends of our Cambodia, whose troops are working under the UN flag and carrying out various important tasks to maintain peace and improve our Cambodian people's livelihood. Particularly, these troops have also been occupied with the repatriation of my Cambodian refugees by escorting them from the Kingdom of Thailand back to Cambodia.

I would like also to express warmest thanks to H.E. Yasushi Akashi, the high and special envoy of the UN secretary general; all troops, personages, and personnel of the UNTAC [United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia]; as well as the UNAMIC [United Nations Advance Mission in Cambodia] personages, including Their Excellencies Ataul Karim and General Michael Loridon, who have come in advance of the UNTAC.

I would like also to thank General Sanderson and the press—that is, the journalists.

In conclusion, I would like once again to thank and commend all children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren present here and in other areas far from here for being faithful to our motherland. I want to tell you that the peace that we have regained will not last long if we cannot achieve genuine reconciliation. We may have some problems with peace as fighting is still going on in some areas, such as in Kompong Thom Province. This is very unfortunate.

For this reason, on this meeting with all children and grandchildren here today to which the four factions also sent their very distinguished representatives to be with me here and be with monks and all children and grandchildren here, Samdech Euv would like to appeal to all of

you children and grandchildren from all factions to really reconcile with each other so we can maintain peace 100 percent for our nation and motherland, thus enabling our compatriots and people to enjoy happiness and prosperity as in the past, as the governor of Banteay Meanchey Province said in the clear and meaningful speech he made just how—that is, in Samdech Euv's era of Sangkum Reas Niyum when all the world called our country the isle of peace.

Therefore, we should unite so our country can regain its good name, the isle of peace, for the happiness and prosperity of our compatriots, particularly the children and grandchildren in the countryside and provinces, as well as children and grandchildren who have returned home from the Kingdom of Thailand. After achieving peace and happiness, we will be able to make our Cambodia prosperous as in the Angkor era when we were prestigious in the international arena and in the world.

I am not hiding the many existing problems from you. Children and grandchildren are very courageous in coming back to help me resolve these problems jointly with our fellow Cambodians. Many problems still exist. But we must know that our Cambodian strength, our unity, is not small. If we unite, we will have great strength for surmounting all problems, all obstacles successively. Moreover, there is assistance by H.E. Yasushi Akashi and the United Nations, UNTAC, and many other international organizations, such as the UNHCR and ICRC, and H.E. Vieira de Mello and his colleagues. They will help you and assist me in resolving all problems until we achieve happiness and prosperity for all the eight to nine million children and grandchildren of our Cambodia.

I would like to end my speech now. Thank all of you very much.

May the Triple Gems of Lord Buddha bless and protect all my beloved children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. May all of you enjoy the five blessings of Lord Buddha. Thank you. Thank you very much. [applause]

Sihanouk To Leave 7 Apr for PRC-DPRK Trip

BK0304121592 Phnom Penh Samleng Pracheachon Kampuchea Radio Network in Cambodian 1100 GMT 3 Apr 92

[Head of State and SNC Chairman His Royal Highness Prince Norodom Sihanouk's 3 April message to "compatriots"—read by announcer]

[Text] Most beloved children and compatriots: I, your Prince Father Norodom Sihanouk, am honored to inform you of the following:

1. I am to lead a distinguished delegation of the Cambodian Supreme National Council [SNC] composed particularly of His Excellency [H.E.] Hun Sen, chairman of the Council of Ministers of the State of Cambodia, for official visits to the PRC and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea from Tuesday 7 April to Friday 17 April 1992.

2. I will come back and start work in Phnom Penh again on 17, 18, 19, and 20 April 1992.

3. I ask for your permission, my children and compatriots, to make go back to Beijing of the PRC after 20 April 1992 so that doctors there can check me and take care of some of my health problems. Two weeks after undergoing medical treatment in Beijing, I will return to Phnom Penh to continue serving you, my children and compatriots, and our sacred motherland.

On the coming Cambodian traditional New Year, I would like to express to you, dear children and compatriots, my deepest affection and unswerving loyalty. I would like also to bestow my warmest wishes on all of you. May all of you always enjoy happiness, prosperity, peace, and the five blessings of Lord Buddha.

Phnom Penh, 3 April 1992.
[Signed] Norodom Sihanouk.

Laos

Three-Way Border Intersection To Be Defined

BK0204095692 Vientiane KPL in English 0908 GMT 2 Apr 92

[Text] Vientiane, April 2 (KPL)—Laos, China, and Myanmar [Burma] have agreed on defining their common border intersection following the on-the-spot inspection of the border intersection by technical border teams of the three sides.

A tripartite meeting to sign the minutes on the definition of the border intersection was held in Xieng Hung [name as received], China, on 13-16 March 1992. Heading the sides to the meeting were Mr. Ouan Phommachak, deputy head of the Lao Foreign Ministry's Department 2; Mr. Shi Wan II, ambassador attached to the Chinese Foreign Ministry, and Colonel Tun Aung, commader of water-lane measurement station of the Myanmar Ministry of National Defence.

The sides had thorough discussions on defining the border intersection between the three countries based on the on-the-spot inspection, and signed the minutes on the matter. They also examined and adopted the content of a protocol on defining the border intersection. This will be submitted to the government of each side for the signature.

The minutes deal with the definition of the border intersection between the three countries, the design of border posts, the border marking which is to start on April 5, 1992, and the border intersection mapping as an annex to the protocol.

The meeting was successful as anticipated since all the sides wish to establish the border intersection an area of peace, friendship, and long-term cooperation.

Official on Lao-PRC Border Survey

BK0204144092 Vientiane Vitthayou Hengsat Radio Network in Lao 0500 GMT 31 Mar 92

[Statement by Chaleun Valinthasak, acting director of the First Department of the Foreign Ministry and chairman of the Lao-Chinese Joint Border Committee, in Luang Namtha Province; date not given—recorded]

[Text] Laos and the PRC share an estimated 500 kilometers of common border. Located on the border on the Lao side are Luang Namtha, Phong Saly, and Oudomsai Provinces, while on the Chinese side is the sole Province of Yunnan. Forty-five prefabricated concrete posts are to be placed on important spots agreed on by border technicians of the two sides. Chaleun Valinthasak, acting director of the First Department of the Foreign Ministry and chairman of the Lao-Chinese Joint Border Committee, gave an interview on the survey and the placing of border demarcation posts as Lao and Chinese authorities were holding a ceremony to place a border demarcation post at Ban Boten village, Luang Namtha Province, which is a border crossing point between Laos and China.

[Begining Chaleun Valithasak recording] In executing the task of the joint border committees of Laos and China, we have relied on the border treaty between the Lao People's Democratic Republic and the PRC signed by the prime ministers of Laos and China late last year as well as a map attached to it. In addition, we have also relied on certain generally acceptable standards set forth in international laws. In resolving problems arising during the conducting of the survey and the placing of the border markers, we always consult with one another on the basis of equality, justice, and reason. Our duty is to define on the spot in detail the borderline and the locations where the border demarcation posts will be placed. In addition, we will draft a border protocol between the two countries and (?draw a detailed map) to be attached to the treaty later.

In carrying out our work, the joint border committees of the two countries have set up five joint technical teams to conduct the survey on the border and place border demarcation posts. We have assigned these five joint survey teams to conduct a survey and place the border posts from the (Lasan) Bridge located on the Lao-Chinese- Vietnamese border intersection and along the Mekong River to the Lao-Chinese-Myanmar border intersection. Three teams are carrying out work interchangeably in Phong Saly and Oudomsai Provinces. In Phong Saly Province alone, 26 border demarcation posts are to be placed. Three will be placed in Oudomsai Province and 17 others in Luang Namtha Province. In placing these posts, our committees have to agree and determine with each other where to do that and how many posts are required.

We have also set certain criteria for selecting the locations where the border posts should be placed. The first criterion of selection is that the terrains must be rather unclear and [words indistinct]. The second one is that the location may be located on a certain important point. The third criterion is that the location may be by a roadside or a border crossing point between the two countries. The fourth one is [words indistinct]. The fifth one is determined by certain important peaks. The sixth one is a point located in a densely populated area.

As for the method in conducting the survey of the more than 500 kilometers of our common border, we do not have to walk along its total length. We have agreed (?not to do that). Moreover, most parts of the Lao-Chinese border run through mountainous terrain and high peaks. We can stand on one peak and look around at other adjacent peaks to determine it they are connected; if we think they are, we do not have to inspect them on the spot. We will only send survey teams to that terrain which is difficult to evaluate and unclear to both sides to conduct a survey on the spot to find out the exact locations of the border posts. In conducting the survey, we rely on a map with the scale of 1 to 50,000 that has been approved by the joint border committees of the two sides. We have agreed to use prefabricated concrete posts as demarcation posts.

As for the locations where there are roads linking the two countries, we will use granite posts with national emblems of each country. There are four such locations along the border. The first one is located in Boten-Bohan, to which we have already given a blessing of celebration. Another one is located at (Pakha) in Phong Saly Province. The other two are at (Lan Tui) and Pangthong in Sing District. In carrying out our work, we have encountered numerous difficulties. This is because we do not have roads along most parts of the border. Besides, our people are also scattered in many places. We must transport all construction materials, such as cement, gravel, iron rods, and water to those rugged terrians. The Lao side is responsible for transporting these materials on the Lao side of the border and vice versa. Sometimes we have to use horses and coolies to do the work. [end recording]

Philippines

Manila Warns U.S. Against Meddling in Election

HK0304062492 Hong Kong AFP in English 0559 GMT 3 Apr 92

[Text] Manila, April 3 (AFP)—The Philippine Government warned U.S. officials Friday against meddling in the country's presidential elections as fresh irritants between the two allies surfaced.

Press Secretary Horacio Paredes, reacting to a report that a U.S. Embassy survey showed House Speaker Ramon Mitra leading six rivals in the May 11 polls, said Americans should not "interfere or say anything about our elections."

"That is the best you can do," he said on state-run radio.

Paredes is chief spokesman for President Corazon Aquino, who is campaigning for her political protege and former defense secretary Fidel Ramos.

In its report, THE MANILA CHRONICLE newspaper quoted U.S. ambassador to Manila Frank Wisner as saying that Washington can live with any of three leading presidential contenders—Mitra, Ramos and tycoon Eduardo Cojuangco, an estranged Aquino cousin who was close to late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

"When we choose our president, Mr. Wisner, we don't care whether you like him or not. We are picking a president for ourselves, not for America," Paredes said. "Such statements are annoying."

Paredes said Washington shouldn't interfere because "the whole nation" will not like it.

U.S. interference could cause chaos, and that the winner might be perceived as having succeeded with American support, he added.

Wisner, currently on a trade and investment promotion tour in the United States with other U.S. ambassadors to Southeast Asian nations, called up a private radio station in Manila to deny that there was such a survey.

"The United States will live with whoever the Philippine people choose to be their next president," Wisner said.

"This is a Philippine election. It's to be done by Filipinos. The United States is not involved, is not picking any winners. We're not doing anything like that," he said.

"Obviously we care about how it comes out, and like any country we're following events in your country and assessing them carefully," he added.

Bilateral relations sank to their lowest point in decades when the Philippine Senate last year rejected a draft treaty extending the U.S. military presence in this former colony by 10 years.

Manila has given Washington until the end of the year to vacate Subic Naval Base, its last remaining military facility in the Philippines.

U.S. Survey Seen as 'Subtle' Mitra Endorsement

HK0304030492 Manila THE CHRONICLE in English 3 Apr 92 p 4

[Editorial: "Is the U.S. Embassy Working in Strange Ways?"]

[Text] A rather unseemly "survey" ostensibly conducted by the American Embassy has been circulated over the last few days. The "survey" was first released to select businessmen and then leaked to the press.

This "survey" puts Ramon Mitra ahead, estimating his current share of the vote of 33.9%. Eduardo Cojuangco is running second with 24.7%. Fidel Ramos has 19.6% and Miriam Santiago is on fourth with 15% of the vote.

The LDP [Struggle of Filipino Democrats] public relations bureau initially issued a press release on the survey results, claiming the study was done on orders of President Bush. The item was promptly denied by U.S. Embassy spokesmen. But American information officer Morton Smith admits that the assessment was conducted for internal Embassy use. Curiously, the LDP media bureau later on asked the CHRONICLE to kill the story, eventually disowning any part in the issuance of the press release.

The U.S. Embassy assessment departs rather dramatically from existing public opinion poll surveys. The methodology employed for this assessment is not explicit. None of the major public opinion poll organizations appear to have been involved or are aware of the conduct of the American assessment.

This assessment is now being widely quoted. It is being intensively publicized by those who perceived themselves favored by the purported results.

Inasmuch as the assessment is now public knowledge, the U.S. Embassy should at least disclose the manner by which the results were arrived at. This will allow independent scrutiny of the projections made by the assessment.

Disclosure of the methodology employed in order to arrive at the starting comparison of candidate strengths will satisfy the curiosities of our own analysts. But that alone will not resolve the other political questions raised by the leakage of the U.S. Embassy's assessment.

The United States, we all know, has routinely involved itself in past Philippine elections. Even when its actual ability to influence political outcomes has substantially diminished, the United States is still understood by some as a major player in Filipino politics.

The U.S. Embassy study will, understandably, provoke charges of discreet intervention in our domestic political processes. Whether intended or not, the assessment of comparative candidate strengths may be read as a subtle endorsement for Ramon Mitra. If this is correct, the survey is expected to have great influence on voters making their choices and powerbrokers reviewing their constantly shifting allegiances.

On the surface, the study's release appears timed to have maximum impact on campaign contributors. It is the habit of Filipino electoral financiers to deliver token amounts to all contenders at the onset of the campaign. By mid-campaign, they narrow down recipients of their generosity only to the likely winners. At this time, the major presidential campaigns are under great pressure to deliver their promised financing support to local candidates.

It is assumed that the American assessment will have major influence on the movement of "wise money" (financial "investments" in the likely winners). If this assessment is read as Washington's endorsement for

Mitra's candidacy, campaign contributors will make a beeline to LDP's door. The assessment will then have the effect of a self-fulfilling prophesy.

The assessment will no doubt be used to the hilt by those candidates who appear to be favored by it. Much as Filipinos beat their chests about independence, it was a reality in the past that many voters are swayed by appearances of American favoritism in an electoral contest. Whether American preferences exert the same influence today following the rejection of the bases treaty remains to be seen.

Suspiciousness about an American "invisible hand" in the present contest has fertile ground in the Filipino mind. There is wide recognition that the American hand works in the most mysterious ways. Such suspiciousness can only be heightened by "surveys' such as the one recently emanating from the U.S. Embassy.

The Americans have a lot of explaining to do about both the method and the timing for this "survey." We want that explanation heard soon.

Given the swift and fluid movement of the present campaign, prolonged silence on this issue by those responsible for leaking the results of an odd study cannot be considered virtuous. It will only heighten our habitual nervousness about American interventionism.

Compliance With Sanctions on Libya Readied

Aquino To Continue Diplomatic Ties

HK0304111492 Quezon City Radyo ng Bayan in Tagalog 1000 GMT 3 Apr 92

[Text] [President] Aquino assured the people that the Philippines and Libya will continue to remain friends in spite of her government supporting the United Nations sanctions that will be imposed against Libya. Here is Tanny Rodriquez with the details:

[Begin Rodriquez recording] The president explained that the Philippines, being a UN member, has the obligation to comply with and support the resolution of the Security Council against Libya. The president said we are doing this as a charter member of the United Nations, but we do not also forget the friendly relation we have with the government and people of Libya. The president confirmed that other government agencies are making preparations for a speedy evacuation of the thousands of Filipinos in Libya. The labor department estimated that there were about 10,000 Filipino workers in Libya, including dependents; however they cannot really account for the exact figures. The president added that the Philippine Embassy in Tripoli was ordered to prepare a contingency plan in order to evacuate women and children from Libya and all Filipinos if necessary. [end recording]

Foreign Secretary Expresses Support

HK0304022992 Manila DWIZ Voice of the Filipino People's Radio in Tagalog 2200 GMT 2 Apr 92

[Text] Foreign Affairs Secretary Raul Manglapus says the Philippines must back the UN decision to place sanctions on Libya as of 15 April. He said he believed that as a member of the UN, the Philippines can do nothing but follow the UN resolution.

Meanwhile, Foreign Affairs Under Secretary Pablo Suarez said that, even if the country supports the sanctions, it would be difficult to repatriate personnel from the Philippine Embassy in Libya. He said moves to extend protection to thousands of Filipinos in Libya would be hindered, but hopes are that they will be allowed to leave the country. Libya has been strongly urging foreign diplomats to evacuate their missions. Libyan leader Mu'ammar al-Qadhdhafi said this would be for the safety of officials and employees of foreign embassies.

The Philippine Embassy made a request for evacuation after angry Libyans attacked the embassies of countries that voted in the UN draft resolution placing sanctions on Libya.

Libyans To Continue Issuing Visas

HK0304024192 Manila DWIZ Voice of the Filipino People's Radio in Tagalog 2200 GMT 2 Apr 92

[Text] The Libyan Embassy in the Philippines shall continue to process the papers of Filipinos who wish to visit and work in Libya.

According to (Gidebe), the information attache of the Libyan Embassy, they still have not received any instruction to suspend the processing of papers, especially working visas, for those wishing to go to Libya. He also said that those in Libya are not being prevented from going home to their respective countries if they so wish. This announcement was made by the Libyan Embassy following reports that tension is mounting in Libya after the UN Security Council issued sanctions against the country.

Officials Look Into Evacuation

HK0304043892 Quezon City ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corporation DZMM in Tagalog 0400 GMT 3 Apr 92

[Text] The Overseas Workers Welfare Administration [OWWA] has sent two welfare officers to Libya to look into the possibility of evacuating Filipino workers there. According to Under Secretary Liwayway Calalang, OWWA officer-in-charge, there are an estimated 25,000 Filipinos working in Libya—65 percent are medical and paramedical workers, 20 percent are in oil drilling, while the rest work in factories and in the service industry. Calalang said there is still no need for relatives to worry about the workers as the situation in Libya remains normal, at present. This assessment is based on information received from the Philippine Embassy in Tripoli.

Government Restructures Debt With Japan

HK0304054692 Manila PHILIPPINES NEWSDAY in English 3 Apr 92 p 8

[By Veronica Vargas]

[Text] The Philippines has successfully wrapped up negotiations with the Japanese government for the restructuring of some $720 million in official debts falling due between July 1991 and December 1992, paving the way for the conclusion of year-long talks with the country's 13 Paris Club creditors this month.

A Department of Finance official yesterday said the Philippines will sign the rescheduling deal with Japan, the country's biggest bilateral creditor, this week or early next week. The rest of the $1.5 billion in maturing loans is expected to be covered by similar restructuring agreements before the end of April.

Japan accounts for about 48 percent of the Philippines' total bilateral debts maturing until December 1992. The finance official said there are now a total of nine creditor governments which formally agreed to restructure the bulk of the country's loan obligations, with only four more states expected to give their consent to complete the Paris Club negotiations.

"We are hopeful that all the four governments will give their nod before the end of the month now that Japan has finally agreed to the restructuring," the official pointed out.

Rescheduling deals have already been reached with Canada, Spain, France, Switzerland, Austria, United Kingdom, Belgium and the United States, which is the second biggest Philippine creditor with some $266.7 million in loans falling due during the July 1991-December 1992 period.

The four governments expected to sign restructuring deals with the country this month are Finland, Denmark, Germany and Italy.

Just last week, the Philippines inked an agreement with Belgium for the condonation of about $64.8-million in maturing obligations. The deal covers interest-free rescheduling and a new maturity period of 20 years, inclusive of a 10-year grace period. On the other hand, loans due to the Office National du Bucroise of Belgium will be restructured over a 15-year period with eight years of grace and interest tied to the six-month Belgium interbank offered rate plus 0.5 percentage point.

The Philippines had earlier set a deadline of March 31 for the conclusion of the Paris Club agreements but failed to meet the target due to delays in the drafting of the deals with Italy and Japan.

However, the finance official said the government will have to complete all negotiations by April before a new administration is elected this May.

The Paris Club talks complement the $5-billion comprehensive commercial debt reduction and debt relief package the government worked out with the country's foreign bank creditors last February. Already, a substantial number of the foreign banks have tendered $1.25 billion worth of their Philippine debt paper holdings for a cash buyback arrangement, one of the options under the debt package.

The finance official said the conclusion of the Paris Club negotiations and the success of the debt buyback operation will augur well for the country's continuing efforts to reduce its debt burden.

Imelda Protests Ban on Return of Marcos Remains

HK0304020992 Manila DWIZ Voice of the Filipino People's Radio in Tagalog 2200 GMT 2 Apr 92

[Text] Imelda Romualdez Marcos has strongly objected to Malacanang's refusal to allow her husband's body to be brought back to the Philippines. She said that she will bring home the corpse of former President Marcos and bury it in Laoag City on 12 April, whether President Aquino agrees to it or not.

She added that the administration's refusal to allow the return of her husband's body is a violation of human rights and the Constitution. It will be recalled that the president has requested the U.S. Embassy to ban the loading of the former despot's corpse on any aircraft bound for the Philippines.

Military Rebel Says Poll Fraud May Cause Coup

HK0304051292 Quezon City ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corporation DZMM in Tagalog 0400 GMT 3 Apr 92

[Italicized passage in English]

[Text] A coup may occur during the elections. This was revealed by detained renegade Colonel Alexander Noble, one of the soldiers charged with rebellion by the government. He said they [Reform the Armed Forces Movement] may launch a coup at any time against any candidate who cheated in the coming polls, especially against the present administration's candidates. This announcement was made by Noble during a hearing held at Camp Aquinaldo, where his counsel, Attorney Homobono Adaza, filed for the dismissal of the rebellion cases filed against him.

Meanwhile, Noble said that their basis for launching a coup depended on the people's complaints. He added that if the people were to revolt against those politicians who cheated before and after the election, they would uphold the people's will through military action.

[Begin Noble recording] *If there is massive fraud and cheating, this will eventually result in mass action and civil disobedience. Because this is our last chance, so they should not frustrate our people.* And as we said before, as far as the Reform the Armed Forces Movement is concerned, we will be behind the people. [end recording]

Noble has also withdrawn from the senatorial race because he believes that his candidacy will not progress because he continues to remain in jail.

Police Identify 'Political' Mercenary Groups

HK0104125792 Manila PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER in English 1 Apr 92 p 1 12

[By Lynda Jumilla]

[Text] Eight groups of "political mercenaries" feared to sow terror during the election period have been identified in a confidential police report to the Commission on Elections [Comelec].

The eight mercenary groups, operating in Batangas, Laguna, Rizal, and Metro Manila, are believed part of the 78 armed groups which the poll body wants neutralized by April 30.

Their specialties include assassination, intimidation and sabotage, police sources said.

In an initial report submitted to the poll body at a command conference in Camp Crame on Monday, the Philippine National Police [PNP] identified the mercenary groups as follows:

—Mendoza group headed by a Captain Mendoza, operating in Metro Manila and Rizal.

—Rivera-Onte-Paz group headed by Manny Rivera, operating in Batangas and Laguna.

—Laguierra-San Vicente group headed by Jun Samson, a former policeman of the Western Police District, operating in San Pedro, Laguna.

—Group headed by a Sergeant Marasigan, Rolando Bolante and Ronaldo Manalao, operating in Cainta, Taytay, Antipolo, and Quezon City.

—"Pael" Kenny group headed by Rafael Kenny, operating in Batangas and Laguna.

—Galicia group headed by former Sgt. Reynaldo Galicia, operating in Batangas and Laguna.

—Tancinco group headed by SPO1 [special police officer, grade 1] Felix Mendoza, operating in the first and second district of Batangas.

—Separes gang headed by Mario Paz, operating in Batangas and Laguna.

The PNP report raised fears that "unscrupulous politicians" would tap the "notorious groups" to sow terror for the rest of the election period.

These groups, PNP sources said, are not identified with any candidate or political party, but commit their loyalty to anyone who can afford their price.

Although the PNP considers them as private armies (groups of three or more armed men), these mercenaries are far more dangerous and elusive because, unlike in the case of ordinary bodyguards, the mercenaries' acts cannot be readily traced to the politicians hiring them, police said.

At least 12 have been reported killed in suspected election-related violence since the start of the election period last Jan. 12.

In the case of the killing of Mayor Octavio Velasco of Ternate, Cavite, and his three companions last March 3, five policemen-bodyguards of Rep. Jorge Nunez have been tagged as suspects. The case is pending in court.

The Comelec says candidates shall be held liable for violations of the election law committed by their men.

Although suspected election-related violence this year is so far not as widespread as in previous elections, the Comelec and the PNP are taking into consideration the local polls, where rivalry is more intense and the probability of violence to erupt is greater.

At least 302 towns all over the country have been tagged as probable election "hot spots."

Of this, 182 towns in 16 provinces were considered "critical areas" and the rest "sensitive spots."

The Comelec, meanwhile, plans to assume a "high profile" in critical areas on May 11 to prevent the outbreak of violence, Commissioner Haydee Yorac said.

Under this strategy, one polls commissioner and two generals—one military and one police—will be fielded in identified troubled spots.

"We are toying with the idea of a high profile presence in difficult parts of the country... we will sit there on election day and make them feel our presence," she said.

Yorac said areas to be placed under strict Comelec watch on election day include Sulu, Tawi-tawi, Lanao del Sur, Masbate, and Cavite.

In Malacanang, President Aquino expressed confidence that the PNP would be able to meet the April 30 deadline for the dismantling of private armies.

"I am sure the Philippine National Police is equal to the job not only of dismantling these private armies but also of doing its share in assuring clean elections," Ms. Aquino said in a press statement.

The President has vowed to make this year's national and local elections honest, peaceful and orderly.

She says more than her desire to see her candidate Fidel V. Ramos win in the presidential race is to ensure a smooth transition of power on June 30, her last day in office.

Two Ramos Supporters Die in Separate Attacks

HK0304003992 Manila DWIZ Voice of the Filipino People's Radio in Tagalog 2200 GMT 2 Apr 92

[Text] Two more Ramos supporters have been killed in separate incidents by unknown assailants. One of the victims was identified as Duca Baliwan, 56 years old, an Epifanio de los Santos Avenue Strength-National Union of Christian Democrats [LAKAS-NUCD] coordinator from Barangay Matagapong, Ambaswan, Maguindanao. Baliwan was killed by armed men while praying in a mosque.

The other victim was identified as Tisoy Fernandez, who was stabbed by an unknown assailant at the Pacita Complex, San Pedro, Laguna.

A total of six Ramos supporter from LAKAS-NUCD have been killed over the past few days.

Cojuangco Linked to 'Frozen' Swiss Assets

HK0204125692 Quezon City Radyo ng Bayan in Tagalog 1000 GMT 2 Apr 92

[Text] The Presidential Commission on Good Government [PCGG] claims to have in its possession a document linking presidential candidate Eduardo Danding Cojuangco to $7 million in frozen assets in Switzerland.

PCGG Chairman David Castro said that they have the name and the passport number of the beneficiary who opened the account in June 1985. According to Castro, the account is under the name of a certain Mrs. Soledad Cojuangco, believed to be the alias of Gretchen Cojuangco, Danding Cojuangco's wife. He added that Mrs. Soledad Cojuangco opened an account with passbook number 7121 with a bank in Geneva in 1985. The information and signatures on the account prove that both Soledad and Gretchen Cojuangco are one and the same person.

NPA Said Demanding Campaign 'Permit' Payments

HK0304032292 Manila BUSINESS WORLD in English 3 Apr 92 p 12

[By Ramoncito de la Cruz]

[Text] A presidential candidate who wishes to campaign in communist-influenced areas should pay a P200,000 [Philippine pesos] fee to the local New People's Army [NPA] commander to secure a "permit to campaign."

This was disclosed yesterday by the Philippine National Police [PNP] after police operatives decoded parts of classified documents seized following different raid operations conducted recently.

According to a police intelligence report submitted to the Commission on Elections, aside from the P200,000 fee, the presidential aspirant and his running mate should also donate 20 water pumps for the communities they will campaign in.

For the other candidates seeking national and local executive posts, the NPA has set the "payment scale" at the following levels:

—P150,000 and five water pumps for gubernatorial candidates;

—P100,000 and four water pumps for senatorial candidates;

—P50,000 and five water pumps for congressional candidates; and

—P10,000 and two water pumps for mayoralty and vice-mayoralty candidates.

No Evidence Yet

According to the Camp Crame source, there has yet been any evidence that could pinpoint who among the candidates have fallen into the extortion scheme. [sentence as published]

However, the report has already identified the regions where the "permit" will be issued. They are the Cordillera, Bicol, Western and Northern Visayas and the Southern Mindanao areas.

He added that PNP director general Cesar Nazareno has already ordered regional directors to verify any report that rebel emissaries have been trying to contact or negotiate with any politician.

Candidate Reportedly Pays for NPA Pass

HK0304045392 Manila DWIZ Voice of the Filipino People's Radio in Tagalog 2200 GMT 2 Apr 92

[Text] A presidential candidate has given P2 million [Philippine pesos] to the New People's Army [NPA] in order that he may campaign in the five regions controlled by the communist organization.

According to a report submitted by the Philippine National Police to the Commission on Elections, the NPA stand to solicit an estimated P25 billion from political candidates in exchange for their safe-conduct passes. The report also revealed that a gubernatorial candidate wili pay up to P50,000 for a safe-conduct pass, while vice gubernatorial and mayoral candidates will pay up to P10,000. The rebels were also reported to be asking for water pumps to be installed in the far-flung barrios controlled by the NPA.

Court Halts Release of Local Relief Funds

HK0304021092 Manila DWIZ Voice of the Filipino People's Radio in Tagalog 2200 GMT 2 Apr 92

[Text] The Supreme Court has ordered a stop to the release of millions of pesos from a rebel rehabilitation fund which the Department of Local Government [DLG] and the Department of Budget and Management [DBM] are providing to local officials in the southern Philippines. The temporary restraining order was passed

by the high court in response to a petition filed by Senator Neptali Gonzales against DLG Secretary Cesar Sarino and DBM Secretary Salvador Enriquez.

The Supreme Court also gave Sarino and Enriquez 10 days in which to respond to Senator Gonzales' petition which claims that the national government is utilizing the National Rebel Returnees Fund to back the candidacy of former Defense Secretary Fidel Ramos.

President Corazon Aquino has expressed her acquiescence to the Supreme Court ban on the release of the funds from the National Reconciliation and Development Program. During her meeting with legal advisers, she was informed that the use of the funds are legal. It will be recalled that Senator Gonzales has been accusing the government of using the funds to back Ramos' candidacy.

The Supreme Court has also asked for an oral argument between Senator Gonzales and acting Solicitor General Ramon Desucido on the matter.

Meanwhile, Senator Orlando Mercado urged Malacanang to make a financial report on the release of the rehabilitation funds, including those funds received from abroad for victims of the Pinatubo eruption. Mercado said this after receiving reports that 15,000 families affected by the volcanic eruption would starve if the 1992 budget for the evacuees was not released immediately. The senator said the people have a right to know how the government has spent millions of dollars donated by foreigners for the Pinatubo victims.

Military Presence Boosted in Sagada 'Peace Zone'

HK0104124492 Manila BUSINESS WORLD in English 1 Apr 92 p 12

[By Genevieve Soledad]

[Text] Sagada, Mt. Province—The highly vaunted Sagada peace zone is falling apart in the face of intensified military presence in the area.

In a meeting with media Sunday night, the military confirmed reports that Sagada residents have already been signed up for membership in the Civilian Armed Forces Geographical Unit (CAFGU).

Local officials observed that the military started beefing up its forces in the area after the NPA [New People's Army] launched two ambushes last September.

These operations were supposed to be retaliatory moves against the military's attack on Mt. Sisipitan, alleged to be a haven for NPA camps.

Sagada vice-mayor Tom Killip however expressed fears that increased military presence in the area might provoke the NPA into openly attacking Sagada.

"With the establishment of the peace zone, the military should not have organized CAFGUs," other observers said. Apparently, the root cause of the problem could be traced to the lack of a proper definition of what a peace zone should really be.

To some members of the town's peace committee, a peace zone should mean that both the military and the NPA can be allowed to enter Sagada for as long as they do not carry their arms inside the area.

Other members on the other hand define a peace zone as a place where the military can roam around heavily-armed and be considered off-limits to NPA attacks.

Mt. Province Governor Roy Pilado, meanwhile has yet to figure out his own concept of what a peace zone is.

On the military end, Commanding [as published] General Arturo Enrile, defines a peace zone as a place where both warring parties should not be allowed to enter even if they come unarmed.

He clarified that although Sagada was the only peace zone recognized by the AFP [Armed Forces of the Philippines], the military still does not necessarily accept all the conditions put forward by the other side (the NPA).

By this, he explained that the policies set forth by the Sagada peace zone did not just naturally come from the people but from the NPA.

"We recognized the Sagada peace zone because we did not want the people to say we were against peace," Maj. Gen. Enrile said.

He also admitted that the peace zone in Sagada is just not working.

The official asserted that a concept of a Sagada peace zone will never work out until the NPAs have totally removed their presence from the area.

"We are just preparing the area for the realities of a peace zone," Maj. Gen. Enrile said.

Thailand

Preparations Made To Evacuate Workers in Libya

BK0304011192 Bangkok BANGKOK POST in English 3 Apr 92 p 6

[Text] The Interior and Foreign Affairs ministries are prepared to evacuate some 30,000 Thai workers out of Libya in case of emergency, deputy permanent secretary for interior Benjakul Makarathat said yesterday.

Libya has been given until April 15 to hand over suspects for trial in the United States or Britain for the 1988 bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland in which 270 people were killed.

If they fail to hand over the suspects, they face sanctions including prohibition of air travel to Libya.

Mr Benjakul said the Thai workers would be transferred to a neighbouring country if the situation in Libya becomes serious. And, if there is not a safe sanctuary for them in a neighbouring state, they will be brought home.

He said the employment firms will be responsible for the evacuation expenses of workers sent to Libya with the consent of the Labour Department.

Meanwhile, Deputy Interior Minister Charoenchit na Songkhla said the ministry has asked Thai labour officials in Athens, Greece, to assist Thai labour officials in Libya.

Mr Charoenchit said Thai labour officials in Greece were also told to contact the employers, mostly dealing with the construction of roads and man-made rivers in Libya, to provide safety for the Thai labourers in case of violence.

"So far officials in Greece have contacted a major foreign firm, employing 11,190 Thai workers. It has agreed to cooperate," the Deputy Minister said.

The Interior Ministry has prohibited new Thai workers from being sent to Libya until further notice, a source said.

Only workers with reentry visas will be allowed to return to that country, according to the source.

The source said of the about 30,000 Thai workers in Libya, about 20,000 went with the Labour Department's approval. Expenses for their evacuation can be claimed from their employers.

But, for the evacuation of those who went without the department's approval, the Thai Government would have to bear the expenses, the source said.

More Funds Sought for Army Mission in Cambodia

BK2803065092 Bangkok Radio Thailand Network in Thai 0000 GMT 28 Mar 92

[Text] Thai Army engineers, sent by the Thai Government to clear land mines and repair roads in Cambodia at the request of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees [UNHCR], have successfully defused a massive number of land mines and repaired roads without incurring casualties. This statement was issued by Lieutenant General Wanlop Chittaroek, director of the Information Office of the Supreme Command Headquarters:

[Begin recording] The first Thai Army engineering task force assigned to clear land mines and repair the road from Poipet to Sisophon has already completed its task. The task force defused land mines along the route and rebuilt the entire route, making it usable for all kinds of vehicles. The second Thai Army engineering task force dispatched to Sisophon has cleared land mines and repaired a 16-kilometer portion of the route. Moreover, the United Nations has given the Thai troops the additional assignment of searching for and destroying land mines along Route 69 from Sisophon to Ampil. The two battalions of Thai Army engineers have performed their duties excellently, without any damage or loss incurred by the Thai soldiers. This was the result of their very careful operations.

I would like to ask the mass media to publicize this issue. At the same time, I would also like to urge the mass media to render a form of support for our soldiers operating in Cambodia. The Thai task forces still need more funds to carry out their work, since funds received from the United Nations are slim and insufficient. Therefore, I would like this message to be conveyed publicly so that the United Nations will urge the countries that earlier pledged financial assistance to the international organization to render such help quickly. [end recording]

Officials Seek Fish Trade Agreement With EC

BK2803024592 Bangkok THE NATION in English 28 Mar 92 p B1

[Text] The Foreign Trade Department is hopeful that an agreement can be reached with the European Community next week on exports of Thai canned bonito under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP).

A senior official who asked not to be named, however, offered assurances that Thai authorities would not withdraw over 5,000 Form A certificates issued to Thai bonito exporters under the concessional tax scheme in the past two years. He declined to reveal what the Thai proposal would be.

Three options were raised as a means of settling the dispute with the EC, which claimed that canned bonito exported by Thailand did not contain the type of fish eligible for the lower tax rate. Under the GSP scheme, canned bonito sarda is subject to only an 18 per cent tax against the full rate of 24 per cent.

Last year, the Community sent a mission to determine the amount of the fish in Thai waters and found that bonito sarda resources in the country were limited.

EC officials thus asked their Thai counterparts not to issue new certificates which will be used by European importers to claim the tax difference from the Community and to withdraw all 5,400 forms issued in the past two years.

The first option suggested that the EC reject entry of any shipment of canned bonito sarda which may not be eligible for the tax privilege. Thai authorities will cooperate by verifying the Form A certificates on a-case-by-case basis.

The verification process is time-consuming and likely to be rejected by the Community, the source said. So far, the EC has also requested that verification of eight shipments be performed.

Moreover, if future problems concerning the GSP arise, new methods might be suggested; in most cases Thai exporters would be at a disadvantage because the

majority of exports to the EC are agricultural goods which cannot be stored for long periods, he added.

Alternatively, Thai officials will attempt to reach a compromise with the EC through administrative arrangements, but the source declined to elaborate. A suggestion was also made that the government withdraw all of the Form A's already issued to exporters, meaning the suspension of the GSP for the product.

But after the problem has been cleared up, the Community should renew the tax privilege by setting joint inspection arrangements.

However, the source said the last option was the least likely that Thai authorities would adopt in discussing the matter with the EC.

The department will call a joint meeting with the private sector next week for the final time before seeking consultations with the Community, the source said.

Asa Receives Belarussian Deputy Premier

BK2403120092 Bangkok Voice of Free Asia in Thai 1030 GMT 24 Mar 92

[Text] This morning at the Foreign Ministry, Foreign Minister Asa Sarasin received Belarussian Deputy Prime Minister (Nikolay N. Kozykov) and party which consisted of V. Radkevich, chairman of the Foreign Economic Relations Committee, and (Ivan Bolikov), manager of Thaitec Company. The Belarussian deputy prime minister and his party are visiting Thailand as guests of Aspac Company, a joint venture of Thai, the former Soviet Union, and the Japanese private sector. The purpose of the visit is to explore trade and economic relations and promote economic, scientific, and technological cooperation with Thailand. The visitor also expressed interest in importing natural rubber from Thailand, using the $500 million in export credits extended by the Bank of Thailand.

Suchinda Rebuffs Narong Claim of Army Support

BK0304005192 Bangkok THE NATION in English 3 Apr 92 pp A1-A2

[Text] Prime ministerial nominee Narong Wongwan's position looked increasingly tenuous yesterday when Supreme Commander Gen Suchinda Khraprayun rebuffed the Samakkhi Tham Party leader's claim he had the support of the military.

"It's not the duty of the armed forces to back him as prime minister," he said.

On Wednesday night, Narong told a group of selected journalists he and Suchinda had known each other since the latter was assistant army attache some 20 years ago. He also said his relationship with Air Force Commander in Chief ACM [Air Chief Marshal] Kaset Rotchananin went back about 10 years.

Suchinda's terse reply to a question from reporters yesterday appeared to mark a shift to a hands-off stance in his relations with the embattled premiership nominee.

In his initial comment on the U.S. State Department's drug allegations against Narong, Suchinda rapped the United States for raising the controversy. He said he believed Narong had not been involved in the illicit business.

The military leader, who is also deputy chairman of the outgoing National Peacekeeping Council, yesterday said the military had no role to play in the selection of the new prime minister.

"It's the business and responsibility of political parties to find the new prime minister," Suchinda said.

The army chief also said political parties which formed the government would have to decide by themselves whether to set aside key Cabinet portfolios for outsiders. He was referring to Narong's remark on Wednesday that a coalition led by him would let a career military officer serve as defence minister.

Despite the deadlock over the nomination of the new prime minister, Suchinda said he was optimistic the issue would be resolved "in an orderly way". He did not elaborate.

NPKC [National Peace-Keeping Council] Chairman Gen Sunthon Khongsomphong, who is constitutionally empowered to present the premiership nominee for His Majesty the King's approval, said the nomination process needed some time.

Parliament was opened yesterday by His Majesty the King and the House and the Senate will elect their speakers today. Sunthon has said he would consult the House speaker about the nomination.

Sunthon said he would try to finalize the nomination process as soon as possible.

"I cannot say just yet how long it will take but I will try to do it as soon as possible," he said.

The junta leader said it would be premature to make any public comment on the issue.

Sunthon also declined to discuss reports the United States had sent the Thai Government information on its suspicions that Narong allegedly was involved in international drug trafficking.

"This matter is now being handled at a high level and I cannot speak on it," he said.

He said did not expect the row to damage Thailand's relations with the United States. "I don't think so, because this is a personal affair," he told reporters.

Army Chief-of-Staff Gen Wirot Saengsanit, meanwhile, denied reports military leaders had met and voiced concern

about the adverse repercussions Narong's appointment as premier could have on Thai-U.S. relations.

Army Deputy Commander in Chief Gen Itsaraphong Nunphakdi, reflecting the same hands-off stand publicly taken by the military, said the NPKC had not interfered with the selection of the new prime minister and the formation of the new Cabinet.

"We let politicians handle political affairs. We in the NPKC have nothing to do with it," he said.

The move by army leaders to distance themselves from Narong belied speculation the Samakkhi Tham Party and its four political allies had the backing of the military. The military shifted its stand apparently because of a political crisis that Narong has become enmeshed in after the disclosure of the U.S. drug allegations. The political crisis has been exacerbated by Narong's intransigence over the nomination bid.

Political analysts believe Narong will have to step aside or else risk having his nomination withheld by Sunthon.

Senate Elects Ukrit Assembly President

BK0304080892 Bangkok Radio Thailand Network in Thai 0530 GMT 3 Apr 92

[Text] The Senate held its first meeting of the year at the Parliament House this morning. The meeting was presided over by the most senior member, Osot Kosin.

After hearing the royal decree appointing senators, the senators took the oath of office and elected the president and vice presidents of the assembly. The name of Ukrit Mongkhonnawin was proposed as senate president, and those of Asa Meksawan and General Wichit Bunyawat as first and second vice presidents, respectively. The session unanimously voted in support of the proposals.

The acting assembly chairman welcomed the decision, saying that the senators had voted for people of efficiency and capability to work for them as senate president and vice presidents. The three persons have already worked in the National Legislative Assembly over the past year and their work greatly contributed to the country. The senate meeting closed at 1020.

Daily Democratic Process, Flaws in Elections

BK2903075492 Bangkok THE NATION in English 29 Mar 92 p A10

[Editorial: "Year of Elections, But Maybe Not of Democracy"]

[Excerpts] On the surface 1992 would seem to be the year of Democracy. Communism has collapsed in all countries except China, North Korea, Vietnam and Cuba, dictatorships have fallen throughout Latin America and Africa, and governments in Asia are getting progressively less authoritarian. Elections are being held or have been held in a host of countries this year, including the United States, Britain, Israel, Taiwan, France, South Korea and now probably Japan, not to mention last Sunday's general election here or the upcoming Bangkok polls. With all this furious election activity, democrats have a lot of reason to cheer, right?

Maybe.

Elections are the primary trapping of democracy, but should never be confused with democracy itself. Democracy is more than an occasional exercise at the polls; it is a state of mind among the people when they feel in control of their destiny, and more importantly, believe they have the right to control it. As such, it requires a free flow of information, transparency in government at both the local and national levels, and a certain amount of equality between the rulers and the ruled.

Of course democracy rarely lives to these ideals. And elections, even when outright fraud vote-stealing or ballot box-stuffing are not involved, can rarely be called strictly democratic. All too often, they are simply exercises to legitimize a stifling status quo or to force people to pick between bad choices.

That is certainly what we are seeing this year. Despite what seems to be a surge of democratic awareness and a desire to make their voices heard, voters around the world are finding that exercising their democratic rights in the final analysis often doesn't mean much. [passage omitted]

In Thailand also, there is a clear anti-establishment feeling, as seen in the Phalang Tham Party's sweep in Bangkok last Sunday. Yet here as well, voters, who came out in large numbers to express their faith in democracy despite widespread cynicism, are realizing that in the end, their efforts may not really mean much. There is little in the fallout from last week's election that can really be called democratic.

Let's take a look at the top candidates for the premiership, for one. Samakkhi Tham leader Narong Wongwan has been nominated for the top post by the alliance of five pro-military parties, yet it is still uncertain whether rumours about his past will end his candidacy. That leaves Chat Thai head ACM [Air Chief Marshal] Sombun Rahong and Gen Chawalit Yongchaiyut of the New Aspiration Party. It is very hard to imagine that if there were a nationwide plebiscite for a leader in this country, either Narong or ACM Sombun would come out ahead.

Gen Chawalit, certainly, enjoys wide popularity, but there is considerable opposition to him in some military circles. In the end, it seems likely that the Thai people will be handed a leader with whom they are unfamiliar and perhaps not entirely happy, but who pleases the powers-that-be.

The parties that won the largest number of seats in last Sunday's polls did so in areas of the country where most of the people are poor and feel powerless in the political

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system. Meanwhile, those parties most committed to democracy won in areas where people are better educated and more critical of their leaders. But caught between a group of opportunistic "old-style" politicians on the one hand and the military on the other, these democratically-minded parties look likely to remain in opposition for a long time to come.

This situation is the result of structural defects in Thai democracy that are not going to go away any time soon. Still, elections can produce democratic results if the educated public puts enough pressure on the powers-that-be to stick to their responsibilities.

For the parties that form a government, that means respecting the voters enough to choose competent people to become ministers and the prime minister. For the opposition, it means keeping the ruling parties accountable rather than always trying to join up with them. And for the military, it means letting the parliamentary process proceed without interference.

Air Force To Purchase Six Fighter Squadrons

BK2803025592 Bangkok THE NATION in English 28 Mar 92 p A1

[Text] The Thai air force will buy six squadrons of jet fighters within the next year, Air Force Commander in Chief Kaset Rotchananin said yesterday.

The air force also wants small and medium-sized transport aircraft to support its naval patrol activities.

"Next year our task will be focused on protecting the abundant naval resources in the South," he said.

The government of Anan Panyarachun repeatedly rebuffed the air force's arms purchase plans. But, in its last days, the administration yielded to the air force's request to buy 36 L-39 Albatros training jets.

Liberation Group Attacks Police Station

BK2503020992 Bangkok THE NATION in English 25 Mar 92 p A3

[Text] Two men on Monday night hurled an explosive device, suspected to be a hand grenade, at a police station in this southernmost province, blowing a small hole in the ground but not harming anyone.

Police said the men also left in front of the district police station in Palukasamoe precinct in the province's Bacho district, a letter, written in the Yawi script, bearing the logo of the Pattani United Liberation Organization (PULO).

In the letter they demanded that their five colleagues arrested in neighbouring Yala province recently be released immediately.

Police said that a preliminary investigation showed that the two men riding on a motorcycle lobbed the explosive, suspected to be a hand grenade, into the police station's compound at about 9 pm. The grenade exploded near the station's flag pole, carving out a small pit of 15 cm wide and five cm deep.

Narathiwat Governor Khiangsak Thammaracharak, meanwhile, said that he suspected that the incident the work of those who wanted to create unrest rather than the PULO themselves.

Pol Maj Sunthon Norarat, a provincial police chief said that a special task force has already been assigned to track down the suspects. He had also sought the cooperation of police in Pattani and Yala provinces in hunting for the culprits.

Vietnam

Spokeswoman Reports 'Progress' on MIA Issue

BK0304111392 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam in English 1000 GMT 3 Apr 92

[Report on Vietnamese Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Ho The Lan's remarks at 3 Apr Hanoi news conference on Cambodian and MIA issues and on National Assembly Chairman Le Quang Dao's forthcoming trip to Japan—italicized portions in Vietnamese fading into English translation]

[Text] A spokeswomen for the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry, Mrs. Ho The Lan, affirmed that Vietnam had cooperated with the Supreme National Council of Cambodia and the United Nations and concerned parties in implementing the Paris agreement on Cambodia.

Mrs. Ho The Lan was speaking at a regular press conference in Hanoi held on Thursday.

Concerning a question raised by a correspondent of the Japanese News Agency ASAHI about Mr. Hun Sen's request for Japanese troops to Cambodia, Mrs. Ho The Lan said:

Vietnam hopes that the problems of the Cambodian people must be solved by themselves on the basis of respect for the independence and sovereignty of Cambodia and the UN Charter. The Japanese Constitution stipulates that Japan should not dispatch its troops out of the country. This is the decision of the Japanese people themselves. Vietnam supports every political and economic contribution of Japan to the cause of peace, stability, and development in Southeast Asia.

Mrs. Ho The Lan also noted that Chairman of the Vietnamese National Assembly Le Quang Dao will pay a visit to Japan this month.

Also at this press conference, Mrs. Ho The Lan reported on the progress of the MIA issue. She said:

The 16th joint Vietnamese-U.S. search was carried out with good results. Thirty-three U.S. experts participated in the joint search for the largest number of cases so far in different localities in three regions of Vietnam.

The Vietnamese and U.S. MIA offices collected six remains of MIA in Cong Tum Province, identified them, and sent them to Hawaii.

The two sides resolved the problem of U.S. MIA Office and residents in Vietnam and other related issues.

Vietnam has been conscientiously implementing the agreement reached between the two sides.

Interview With Belarussian Kotivov Reported

BK2403072392 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam Network in Vietnamese 0015 GMT 21 Mar 92

[Interview with visiting Belarus delegation head Nikolai N. Kotivov, vice chairman of the Belarus Council of Ministers, by unidentified QUAN DOI NHAN DAN correspondent; place and date not given—read by announcer]

[Text] [Correspondent] In the new setting, the cooperative relations between Vietnam and the Belarus Republic call for suitable changes. Can you elaborate on the prospects for cooperation between the two countries ?

[Kotivov] Vietnam and Belarus will continue to maintain fine relations in the international arena not just because of the fine traditional relations between the two peoples which are based on mutual understanding but also because Belarus can cooperate with Vietnam in such major fields as mechanical engineering, Belarus' traditional industry. We have the Maz and Bela car factories in Maghinov city which are very familiar to Vietnam, and major factories which build tractors and other agricultural implements. I think that these products will be of good use in Vietnam. I noticed that Vietnam has paid attention to importing these machines. We are very interested in Vietnam's agriculture, especially in the rubber business. We have agreed to cooperate in growing 40,000 ha of rubber plants. On the basis of joint ventures with various factories, Belarus will produce truck tires badly needed by Vietnam at present. We also pay attention to the manufacture of electronic equipment and broadcasting techniques. We held some meetings and visited some production installations. I, for one, think that we have great potential to cooperate in developing these sectors. Belarus formerly produced and exported these items to Vietnam, but mainly in the national defense area. Now, we will shift to producing goods of civilian use. As for trade, both countries have agreed to hold an early trade fair in Minsk to exhibit Vietnamese goods that can be exported to Belarus.

[Correspondent] Belarus' famous products are tractors which are well liked in Vietnam. Can you tell us about the prospect for cooperation in this area, and which Vietnamese goods are well liked by Belarussians?

[Kotivov] Since the republics became independent, we have not signed any direct agreement on exporting tractors to Vietnam. We are exporting high-quality tractors much sought after by many countries in the world. We hope that we can sell these in Vietnam. I can not tell for sure which Vietnamese goods are sought by Belarussians. Yet, through my visits to the three agrotechnical installations of Thang Long, ready-made clothes at Thang Long and the electronic (HANEN) facility, I think that these goods will certainly be exhibited at the forthcoming trade fair in Minsk. I think that Belarussian consumers will like all Vietnamese goods of high quality.

[Correspondent] Can you tell us about Vietnamese workers in the Republic of Belarus?

[Kotivov] As we have agreed with Vietnam, Belarus will consider the continued implementation of signed agreements with Vietnam concerning Vietnamese workers in the former Soviet Union. However, since Belarus is shifting to a market mechanism, the structure of manpower and workers in our republic will also be rearranged and changed. When it has been stabilized, we will continue to consider possible cooperation in this field.

[Correspondent] How do you assess Vietnam's role in Belarus' policy of cooperation with Asia as a whole ?

[Kotivov] We highly value Vietnam's role in our policy of cooperation with Asian countries. Vietnam's market is a bridge for us to approach Asian markets. I think that Vietnam will help us in our relations with other Asian countries.

[Correspondent] What are the most difficult problems currently facing Belarus?

[Kotivov] First, it is the shift to a market mechanism. This is a very complicated process. Then, the consequences of Chernobyl. Belarus has to bear some 70 percent of these consequences. At present, we must continue to evacuate the people from the affected area. This task is very expensive.

[Correspondent] What do you think of the Vietnamese nation?

[Kotivov] You are marvelous people. You work not only as the Constitution requires but also as your conscience dictates.

Army Paper Comments on 'New Political Order'

BK2803045992 Hanoi VNA in English 1427 GMT 27 Mar 92

[Text] Hanoi VNA March 27—A new political order in Southeast Asia based on friendship, cooperation, good neighbourliness and good relations with all other countries which have interests in the region is shaping and continues to develop, says the Army QUAN DOI NHAN DAN in a commentary today.

The paper continues: "At present, the world situation is still not stable, so a clear judgement on the new world order is still premature.

But one thing is certain, that is the world is developing in a very diversified manner. All nations have awakened

and understood well that their nation's interests are tied to the interests of all other nations.

The tendency to independence and self-reliance is linked with the tendency to cooperation (not alliance) to survive and develop. The world is developing in the direction of diversification and multi-nuclearisation. The centers are not homogenous in all respects some have a comprehensive attraction power. Others are attractive in only a number of fields.

These centers are both independent from and cooperative with one another. The recent summit meeting of the United Nations Security Council has further illustrated the trend toward multi-nuclearisation to build a new international order is the mainstream of our era. The era when a number of big powers controlled the world and decided the destiny of other nations has entered its final stage...

The success of the Vietnamese people's liberation war against neo-colonialism has helped push the post-war world order one step further in the direction of democratisation. Vietnam has made a worthy contribution to heightening the role of the Nonaligned Movement and turning this movement into a political center of the developing world.

Today, with its policy of comprehensive renovation and open-door foreign policy to make Vietnam a friend of all countries, the Vietnamese people are contributing to the shaping of a new world order. By proclaiming our desire to be friend of all other countries we do not mean to place our national interests above class and international interests as is the case with opportunism and pragmatism.

The national interests, as we understand it, are first of all the interests of the working people: workers peasants and intellectuals. At the same time, we are deeply aware that the interests of the nation are inseparable from those of other nations, especially in security and development. Therefore, the policy of befriending all other countries does not mean that we have renounced struggle and would refrain from denouncing acts and policies detrimental to peace, national independence, democracy and social progress nor shall we give up our support to the struggle of the other peoples for the noble objectives of our time."

The paper stresses in conclusion: "The current developments in Southeast Asia along the trend of peace, friendship and cooperation will certainly help accelerate the shaping of a new world order based on democracy, friendship, equal cooperation and mutual benefit."

1 Apr National Assembly Group Discussion Report

BK0204100592 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam Network in Vietnamese 1100 GMT 1 Apr 92

[Report by station correspondent Dao Nguyen on 1 April National Assembly group discussion on the draft bill on National Assembly organization—italicized passages recorded]

[Text] Dear friends, at this morning [1 April] group discussion, National Assembly deputies focused their debate on issues related to the law on National Assembly organization. According to our radio correspondents at various group discussions, all deputies agreed to the name of the law. They asserted that the National Assembly is the people's highest representative organization and the highest organ of authority of the SRV. The law on National Assembly organization will help institutionalize stipulations of the revised Constitution; compile the National Assembly's role, position, function, and activities into regulations to help it effectively develop in the new situation; and create favorable conditions for deputies to stay close and listen to the people's aspirations in order to discuss and resolve their problems.

Discussing concrete details in the draft bill on National Assembly organization, deputies from Hanoi, Quang Nam-Danang, Ho Chi Minh City, Song Be, Tay Ninh, Dong Nai, Ba Ria-Vung Tau, Yen Bai, Lao Cai, Lai Chau, Son La, and other provinces agreed to the draft bill stipulation that the National Assembly convene three sessions a year to promptly formulate measures to cope with swift changes in the present situation, and that twice-yearly sessions were not sufficient for the National Assembly to firmly grasp the situation of the nation. The deputies also suggested that the draft bill clearly specify that the number of National Assembly deputies will not exceed 400, among them 100 deputies specializing in various fields. These are the issues to be debated extensively at group and plenary discussions.

There were also noteworthy ideas contributed by the deputies to various chapters and articles of the draft bill. These include organization of the councils and committees of the National Assembly. Deputies from Tay Ninh, Song Be, Dong Nai, Kien Giang, Minh Hai, Yen Bai, Lai Chau, Son La, Vinh Phu, and Quang Nam-Danang Provinces agreed to stipulations of the draft bill that a National Assembly Standing Committee be established with a chairman and deputy chairman, and that the Council of State chairman will function as the chief of state.

Discussing various committees of the National Assembly, Comrade Dang Van Ly, deputy from Tay Ninh Province said:

Regarding committees of the National Assembly, I think that besides the Nationalities Council, we should maintain the judiciary committee because the function of the National Assembly is to formulate laws, and thus this committee is very important and its authority should be clearly defined. Second, the Economic and Budget committees should be combined into one committee and its function clearly specified. Third, there is the Culture, Education, and Youth Committee. I agree that we should maintain it as stipulated by the draft bill. I also agree to the draft bill on the organization of a fourth committee on

social welfare issues; a fifth committee on science-technology, industry, and environment; and a sixth committee on foreign relations. In our discussion, some deputies suggested that we should set up a new committee called the People's Aspirations Committee. This committee is also essential but I think we can combine it with the Social Welfare Issues Committee.

Many deputies agreed that while we have the Nationalities Council and the National Defense and Security Council, we do not need a National Assembly National Defense and Security Committee. Deputies from Dong Nai and other provinces called for efforts to clearly define the function and responsibility of each committee of the National Assembly. The draft bill on National Assembly organization did not clearly specify this. As a result, the National Assembly, with its law formulating duty, should clearly define the function and responsibility of these committees.

Deputy Huynh Van Binh of Dong Nai Province specified on this issue: *There are seven committees on the bill being debated this time concerning organizing the National Assembly. They are the judiciary, economic, budgetary, cultural and educational, youth, social—including scientific, technological, and environmental issues—, and foreign affairs committees. Since the main function of the National Assembly is legislation, the position and function of the judiciary committee should be determined more clearly. Nearly all other committees are also assigned the primary function of reviewing bills for petition, and even laws, projects, and regulations related to the managerial control of the economic and other domains. I think this is irrational. We should concentrate on a vital committee—that is, the judiciary committee, considering it the main committee to help the National Assembly review and pass all bills. If all other committees are also assigned the primary function of reviewing bills as stipulated in the draft, it will restrict the function and task of the judiciary committee. To sum up, the judiciary committee is a vital one to review all bills to be submitted to the National Assembly for passage. As for other committees, depending on their assigned tasks, they will participate in the domains with which they are familiar.*

Yet, some other deputies of Vinh Phu and Lao Cai Provinces held that the National Assembly's Judiciary Committee should be assigned the additional function of generally controlling the enactment of laws nationwide. As a result, the people's organ of control should be remolded into the prosecution and should not assume the general function as it did before, since this task has already been taken care of by a state agency. One of the issues of concern to the deputies is defining the functions and tasks of various councils and committees of the National Assembly to suit the national situation.

Some deputies suggested the addition of the word teenagers to the committee on culture, education, and youths. Some others proposed integration of the economic and budgetary committees into one so the total number of National Assembly committees remains seven to cover all the important issues of the country.

As for the chapter on the election of National Assembly deputies, all the delegations to the National Assembly maintained that the bill on organizing the National Assembly elections has already stipulated the functions and tasks of the deputies and their terms of office. As for the impeachment of deputies, it can be initiated by voters, the people's councils, and the National Assembly itself.

Elaborating on this issue, Deputy Le Cong Co of Quang Nam-Danang Province said: *I suggest that the National Assembly structure must be organized politically. We cannot do away with the criteria set for such an organizational structure. For example, a deputy from a state-owned factory must know thoroughly about his profession so he can talk about his factory. An ethnic deputy must be capable of uniting the people of all nationalities. There cannot be a deputy for every ethnic people. Quang Nam-Danang Province now has six tribal peoples but it cannot have six deputies. Deputies from the front are assigned the task of rallying all mass organizations and electorates to settle this structural problem through the party leadership in order to ensure that the National Assembly is the organ of people's power in conformity with the mechanism that requires party leaderhip.*

Dear friends: This afternoon the deputies continued to hold group discussions on the 1992 state budget estimate.

2 Apr National Assembly Morning Session Held

BK0204061692 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam Network in Vietnamese 0500 GMT 2 Apr 92

[Text] This morning, 2 April 1992, the National Assembly held a group discussion on two main issues: the demarcation of administrative boundaries of provinces and cities directly subordinated to the central government, and the 1992 national budget estimates.

In their group discussion, most of the delegates agreed with the National Assembly report on the boundary adjustment by the Council of Ministers. They maintained that in the current situation, the provinces should not be further divided because they have been correctly separated and are settling well, and that further splitting will create difficulties for the national budget and the implementation of national economic policies.

This afternoon, the National Assembly will hold their meeting in the conference hall on the Draft Bill on the National Assembly.

2 Apr National Assembly Afternoon Session Held

BK0304053792 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam Network in Vietnamese 2300 GMT 2 Apr 92

[Report by station correspondent Truong Cong Hoa on 2 April sitting of Eighth National Assembly's 11th Session at Ba Dinh Conference Hall in Hanoi—italicized passages recorded]

[Text] Dear friends, yesterday afternoon, 2 April, National Assembly deputies attended the plenary session

at the Ba Dinh Conference Hall in Hanoi to discuss the draft bill on the National Assembly organization. A total of 26 deputies registered to present their ideas, but only 17 made their points while the rest agreed to stipulations of the draft bill. Two groups of ideas were noted among the 17 deputies who aired their views: the first group expressed their own ideas on issues related to the name of the draft bill on National Assembly organization, its contents, and specific stipulations. The second group addressed details in rewording phrases, sentences, words, and so forth of the draft bill.

Most of the deputies have agreed to the name of the draft bill which says: The Law on the National Assembly Organization. Some others suggested that it should be called: The Law on National Assembly Organization and Activities. Many deputies expressed their identity of views on the National Assembly Judiciary Committee's investigative report related to the National Assembly and the important role of deputies. Regarding this issue, Comrade Cao Le Thuan, deputy from Ho Chi Minh City said:

For the sake of clarity, I suggest that the name of the bill should be called: The Law on Organization and Activities of the National Assembly. This is because the old law was called: The Law on Organization of the National Assembly and the Council of State, and now the organization of the National Assembly will be separated from that of the Council of State. Of course, the organizational aspect is not as simple as forms or names because the organizational aspect will point out past issues that we must review and draw on for experience. I suggest that we maintain the general clause in chapter 1. In chapter 2, we should come directly to issues related to National Assembly deputies. This chapter is very important because the final results rest with activities of deputies.

Many deputies also expressed their ideas stressing the role of Chairman of the National Assembly who will also serve—or be elected by deputies—as chairman of the National Assembly Standing Committee. Some deputies, however, suggested that reconsideration should be made to stipulations on the authority of the National Assembly Standing Committee, reasoning that this committee will function only during the period between two meetings of the National Assembly, thus too much authority should not be vested in it to avoid a possible effect on the role of the chief of state. Discussing this issue, Comrade Nguyen Van Cau, deputy from Kien Giang Province said:

Dear comrades and friends, I am from Kien Giang Province and I think that we should have the National Assembly Standing Committee, but we should make clear that this committee only represents the National Assembly to carry out activities of the National Assembly during the period between two National Assembly meetings.

Regarding the organization of councils and committees of the National Assembly, many deputies agreed to the establishment of the National Defense and Security Committee with the authority to investigate and control similar to other committees. This committee will be set up in addition to the National Defense and Security Council established by the Chief of State. However, many deputies said that we should not set up the National Assembly's National Defense and Security Committee, that the State National Defense and Security Council is sufficient, and that the National Assembly can control and investigate tasks in this regard through activities of a number of government agencies. Regarding the issue of whether we should establish a separate Committee on Economy and Budget or maintain the the old Economic, Planning, and Budget Committee of the National Assembly, some deputies suggested that we should have two separate committees as stipulated in the draft bill, while some others said the old committee should be maintained.

Regarding the National Assembly's Culture, Education, and Youth Committee, Comrade Ha Vinh Du, deputy from Ha Bac Province, said he agreed to the content of the draft bill; while Comrade Pham The Bong, deputy from Hanoi, opposed this idea.

At the same afternoon session, many deputies suggested that the Committee for Social Issues should be called: The Committee for Social and Religious Issues. Some other deputies suggested that we should call it: The Population, Health, and Social Issues Committee. Meanwhile, Comrade Chu Van Luoc, deputy from Haiphong and Comrade Le Chung, deputy from Ho Chi Minh City, suggested that we should set up the Justice and People's Aspiration Committee.

When debating the activities of National Assembly deputies, nearly all deputies contended that there should be full-time working deputies in localities. Some deputies said that the National Assembly committees should have one third of full-time working deputies while each province should have at least one full-time deputy each and this deputy should join the local people's council so that together with the people's council he can have conditions for carrying out his supervisory and controlling functions.

Deputy Ha Thi Du Cu of Quang Nam-Danang said: *Whether the National Assembly committees and deputies can work effectively or not depends on how and what measures we are going to take to solve the problems raised by the committees. This will allow us to avoid wasting time, and to have something to talk about with voters. I propose that we arrive at some solution to help the Ninth National Assembly operate effectively."*

Many deputies clearly pointed out the necessity of maintaining the operations of each delegation of provincial deputies who should have an office to receive the people. When discussing the location of the National Assembly headquarters, many deputies recommended the Hoa Binh Conference Hall in Hanoi. In provinces, the National Assembly office can be established next to the people's council office.

Dear friends: When debating the bill on organizing the National Assembly, some deputies stressed the individual responsibility to voters of each deputy. On this

matter, the Kien Giang Province deputy emphasized: "I recommend that deputies must prove their responsibility to voters, that a people's aspiration committee be established and committees be composed of both full-time and half-time working deputies so that they can reflect the real situation in localities, if we think that sending out deputies from various committees to check the work of deputies in localities is not sufficient."

Deputy Pham Van Nghe of Tay Ninh Province agreed with the proposals of many deputies for holding only two sessions of the National Assembly each year, for prolonging the session somewhat, and for careful preparations to be made. In particular circumstances, special sessions can be convened. In each session, the operations of each deputy during his term of office must be examined and assessed. He explained: "We should assess the activities of each deputy in each session and verify the results to see whether the National Assembly has approved deputies' proposals and suggestions during the last session. As for the assessment of deputies, we should appraise their contacts with voters and the various documents issued by the National Assembly. Therefore, I suggest that this item be included in the bill. Finally, if there is a National Assembly Standing Committee later on, I suggest that the committee send its assessments of deputies to localities which can be served as a basis for voters to recommend delegates to the next National Assembly session."

Dear friends: Concluding yesterday afternoon's sitting, Vice Chairman Phung Van Tuu, who presided over the meeting, observed that many of the views expressed covered practically all the issues that should be debated concerning the bill on organizing the National Assembly, thus permitting the deputies to shift their debate to other issues in this morning's plenary sitting in the Ba Dinh Conference Hall.

Communique No. 8 Issued 2 Apr

BK0204151892 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam Network in Vietnamese 1430 GMT 2 Apr 92

[Communique No. 8 of the 11th session of the eighth National Assembly]

[Text] On the afternoon of 2 April 1992, the National Assembly held a plenary session in the conference hall. Vice Chairman Phung Van Tuu directed the session.

The deputies discussed the draft bill on the organization of the National Assembly. Altogether, there were 16 deputies airing their views on the National Assembly standing committee; the rights and duties of the National Assembly chairman; the organization and coordinated actions of the various councils and committees in the National Assembly; the operating procedures of National Assembly deputies in charge of special and regular activities; the question whether each province and each city should make arrangements for deputies to take charge of special activities; the rights and duties of National Assembly deputies; the necessary conditions for deputies to operate efficiently; and the operating mechanisms of the National Assembly, the National Assembly Standing Committee, and other National Assembly councils and committees.

On 3 April 1992, the deputies will continue to meet in the conference hall to discuss the draft bill on the organization of the National Assembly and another draft bill on elections of National Assembly deputies.

National Assembly Issues 3 Apr Communique No. 9

BK0304152792 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam Network in Vietnamese 1430 GMT 3 Apr 92

[Communique No.9 of the Eighth National Assembly's 11th Session]

[Text] On 3 April, the National Assembly held a plenary session at the conference hall.

In the morning sitting, National Assembly Vice-Chairman Phung Van Tuu presided over the sitting. The National Assembly continued debating over the draft laws governing the organization of the National Assembly and the election of National Assembly deputies. A number of deputies gave their views on some issues such as the title and the composition of the law governing the organization of the National Assembly, the organization and activities of various National Assembly's councils and committees, and steps to be taken to ensure that the National Assembly can effectively perform its various legislative and supervisory functions and decide on important national issues. These issues are the right of citizens to vote and stand for election to the National Assembly, the qualifications for a National Assembly deputy, the total number of National Assembly deputies, the consultative program for recommending and compiling a list of candidates for National Assembly election, the right to campaign for and the substance of an election campaign, the time for campaigning in an election, and the dismissal of a National Assembly deputy in case he should no longer be worthy of being trusted by the people.

In the afternoon sitting, National Assembly Chairman Le Quang Dao presided over the sitting. The National Assembly discussed a report of the Council of Ministers on supplements to the 1992 state budget estimate. There were 15 deputies airing their views over various issues such as the potential of various sources of revenue, steps to be taken to ensure various sources of revenue, the system of arranging various items in the budget, measures to solve budget deficits, the question of unified management over the budget, and the division of duties in budget management between the central and local levels, the system of issuing and managing cash, the increase in electricity consumption fees, and the installation of the north-south high voltage powerlines.

The National Assembly will continue in session at the conference hall on 4 April.

Vo Chi Cong Visits Sapper Force on Anniversary

BK0104142192 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam Network in Vietnamese 2300 GMT 18 Mar 92

[Text] On the 25th anniversary of the sapper force from 19 March 1967-92, Comrade Vo Chi Cong, advisor to the party Central Committee and chairman of the State Council, visited this heroic unit of the Armed Forces on 18 March. Major General Nguyen Nam Kha, deputy chief of the General Political Department, accompanied the chairman.

On behalf of the party and the state, Chairman Vo Chi Cong warmly praised the force for its armed exploits over the past 25 years. He conveyed his best regards and wishes to all generals, officers and enlisted men, national defense employees and workers, wounded and sick soldiers, survivors of fallen heroes, and retired and transferred members of the force .

After recalling achievements of the past 25 years of combat and growth under the leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam and President Ho Chi Minh, Chairman Vo Chi Cong stressed: The sapper force has been deeply imbued with Uncle Ho's teaching that since the force is assigned special tasks and conferred special honor, it must exert special efforts. It has always demonstrated its special loyalty to the party and nation. It has made positive contributions to national liberation and unification, and to the construction and defense of the socialist Vietnam homeland, and has fulfilled its international obligations.

On its tasks in the new revolutionary stage, Chairman Vo Chi Cong specified: To victoriously implement the Seventh National Party Congress lines, you, comrades, should thoroughly understand and scrupulously implement all the positions, guidelines, and policies of the party and the state, and the military and national defense tasks in the new situation. You should build a firm political stand and persist in the socialist objectives and the comphrehensive renovation of the country. More than ever before, you must uphold your vigilance, be ready to fight victoriously in all circumstances, and resolutely frustrate all imperialist plots to carry out the peaceful evolution strategy against the Vietnamese revolution.

The party and state will always put their trust in the people's Armed Forces including the sapper force. Chairman Vo Chi Cong visited the force's production installations with the aim of improving their living conditions.

Minister Doan Khue Writes to Weaponry School

BK0104133192 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam Network in Vietnamese 2330 GMT 23 Mar 92

["Text" of letter from General Doan Khue, minister of national defense, to the Intermediate-Level Weaponry School on its 25th founding anniversary; date not given]

[Text] Dear comrades: On the 25th glorious founding anniversary of the Intermediate-Level Weaponry School, 24 March 1967-24 March 1992, on behalf of the Military Commission of the party Central Committee and the Ministry of National Defense, I would like to convey my kind regards and warm greetings to all cadres, teachers, students, noncommissioned officers, soldiers, office and manual workers, disabled and ailing soldiers, dependents of fallen combatants, and other comrade employees of the school who have been retired from active duty or transferred to other sectors.

For 25 years now, under the leadership of the glorious Communist Party of Vietnam, by implementing venerated Uncle Ho's teachings, and with the care and assistance of the party organizations, administrative organs, and people in the various localities, the school has constantly developed its organization and strength. Cadres, teachers, students, noncommissioned officers, soldiers, and office and manual workers of all generations have developed the glorious traditions of the heroic Vietnam People's Army [VPA], remaining closely united in surmounting all hardships and difficulties, undergoing sacrifices, making persistent efforts for self-improvement, displaying dynamism and creativity in the fulfillment of their duties, and outstandingly carrying out all tasks. The school has organized training activities or conducted refresher courses to provide the entire Army with tens of thousands of officers, cadres, and personnel with elementary, intermediate, or special-level weaponry and amunitions knowledge. This is to enable them to positively contribute to keeping weapons and equipment in good condition, as well as to develop their efficiency, thus creating conditions for our Army and people to score glorious victories in the cause of national liberation and national unification, as well as in the task of defending the socialist Vietnamese fatherland and of fulfilling our noble internationalist mission.

On this glorious occasion, I would like to warmly commend the school for its achievements in the past 25 years. I also would like to thank all sectors, echelons, and compatriots in the various localities for having created every condition for the school to outstandingly fulfill its tasks.

Dear comrades: The cause of national renovation has scored initial yet very important achievements. However, many difficulties and challenges still lie ahead. To successfully implement the lines of the Seventh National Party Congress as well as the resolutions of the party Central Committee and the Military Commission of the party Central Committee, it is necessary for you to profoundly and scrupulously implement all party and state lines and policies as well as the national defense work in the new situation; firmly uphold your political aptitude; persist in the socialist way; and resolutely help make the Army a truly revolutionary, regular, and well-trained military organization, one that is gradually becoming more modernized. It is also necessary for you to constantly renovate and perfect the curriculum as well as the contents of subjects, its presentation, and teaching and learning methods. Efforts must be made to improve

the quality of training activities. It is important for everyone to help maintain unity, remain active and creative, uphold the spirit of self-sufficiency and self-help, broaden democracy, and scrupulously observe discipline, thus enabling the school to become firm and strong in all fields, and have the ability to outstandingly fulfill all tasks and, together with the entire party and people, contribute to the struggle to build and effectively defend the socialist Vietnamese fatherland.

May I wish you good health and many more outstanding achievements in the new revolutionary stage.

My cordial and determined-to-win salutations.

Writes Automobile Technical School

BK0104141392 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam Network in Vietnamese 1400 GMT 23 Mar 92

["Text" of letter from General Doan Khue, minister of national defense, to the Intermediate-Level Automobile Technical School on its 25th founding anniversary; date not given]

[Text] Dear comrades: On the 25th glorious founding anniversary of the Intermediate-Level Automobile Technical School under the Army Tractor Terminal Department, 24 March 1967-24 March 1992, on behalf of the Military Commission of the party Central Committee and the Ministry of National Defense, I would like to convey my kind regards and warm greetings to all cadres, teachers, students, soldiers, office and manual workers, disabled and ailing soldiers, dependents of fallen combatants, and other comrade employees of the school who have retired from active duty or been transferred to other sectors.

For 25 years now, under the leadership of the Communist Party of Vietnam, by implementing venerated Uncle Ho's teachings, and with the care and assistance of the administrative organs and people in the various localities, cadres, teachers, students, soldiers, and office and manual workers of all generations of the school have always remained united to surmount all hardships and difficulties and responded to the emulation movement for strict discipline and good teaching and learning activities. The school has conducted elementary and intermediate-level technical training courses for tens of thousands of cadres, teachers, workmen, technicians, and army tractor commanding officers, thus contributing to the glorious victories of our people for national liberation and national unification, as well as in defending the socialist Vietnamese fatherland and fulfilling our noble internationalist mission.

On this occasion, I would like to warmly commend each one of you for your achievements during the past 25 years. I also would like to thank all sectors, echelons, and compatriots in the various localities for having created every condition for the school to outstandingly fulfill its tasks.

Dear comrades: To successfully implement the resolutions of the Seventh National Party Congress, the party Central Committee, and the Military Commission of the party Central Committee, it is necessary for you to profoundly and scrupulously implement all party and state lines and policies as well as the national defense work in the new situation; constantly uphold your political aptitude; persist in the socialist way; and resolutely help make the Army a truly revolutionary, regular, and well-trained military organization, one that is gradually becoming more modernized.

It is also necessary for the school to continue renovating its work style and improving the quality of its training. Theory must go along with practice. It is important for everyone to uphold the spirit of self-sufficiency and further accelerate the motivation campaign to maintain vehicles and equipment in good condition, and to know how to use them safely and economically. Constant efforts must be made to ensure strict observance of discipline. It is important to attend training courses to gain more professional knowledge and have a good command of scientific and technical knowhow. Measures must be taken to help everyone enhance his quality, revolutionary ethics, and competency. Constant efforts must be made to look after the material and spiritual life of cadres, teachers, students, soldiers, and office and manual workers. It is important for everyone to join hands in making the school firm and strong in all fields and capable of outstandingly fulfilling all tasks.

May I wish you good health and progress.

My cordial and determined-to-win salutations.

Nguyen Ha Phan Addresses Land Disputes Meeting

BK0204100392 Hanoi Vietnam Television Network in Vietnamese 1200 GMT 22 Mar 92

[Text] On 19-20 March in Haynoi, the Council of Ministers held a meeting with vice chairmen of the people's committees, chief inspectors, and heads of land management offices to discuss measures to solve current land disputes. Tran Duc Luong, vice chairman of the Council of Ministers, opened and chaired the conference.

The comrade director of the Land Management General Department reported on current land disputes occurring all over the country under different forms between individuals, and between local people and people moving from other areas under the land reclamation program. Disputes also occur under the agriculture contractual system, between people in handicraft trade reclaiming land from peasants, between state agriculture and forest farms, and between organizations and individuals—disputes about administrative border lines and so on. The land disputes greatly affect production and peasants' livelihood. Their cause is the uniform, unclear, changing land policy and loose, arbitrary, and unregulated land management. In some areas, cadres abuse their authority and violate state regulations. Many statements agreed with the government report, supplemented

by their local information, and suggested many concrete measures to improve the land management and settle the current land dispute.

Comrade Nguyen Ha Phan, secretary of the party Central Committee and director of the party Economic Department, delivered a speech. After commending the leading role of party committees in rural areas for their great contribution to the successful implementation of Resolution 10 and the state's lines and policies on agriculture, he mentioned some issues that need to be paid attention to when solving land disputes. He instructed local officials to motivate peasants to strictly implement the laws on land and improve the management of cooperatives and governments at all levels in following party lines, showing unity in the rural areas, and being vigilant against sabotage and plots solicited by bad elements.

Radio Gives Details of National Power Grid

BK0104055592 Hanoi Voice of Vietnam in English 1000 GMT 31 Mar 92

[Text] Work started on 9 March, 22 days ahead of schedule, for the construction of a unified national transmission line which will run over a distance of 1,462 km from the Hoa Binh hydroelectric power plant in the north to the suburbs of Ho Chi Minh City.

Two weeks earlier Electricity Grid Construction Company No. 1, which is building the first section of the 550 kv transmission line, used construction machinery to clear the ground along the 254-km stretch from Hoa Binh to Vinh.

Twelve hundred workers have to work in sometimes difficult terrain infested with malaria. They will have to negotiate the crossing of four large rivers and dozens of streams before the rainy season sets in. In all, the construction will involve the removal of millions of cubic meters of earth and rock, the pouring of 30,000 cubic meters of concrete and the erection of 570 chrome-plate steel pylons and poles totaling more than 14,000 tons in weight, plus thousands of kilometers of cable and other technical materials.

The most dangerous and longest of the four sections will be undertaken by Electricity Grid Construction Company No. 3. To facilitate completion of the 470 km between Vinh and the port city of Danang on the central coast, the company has used several sapper units to clear mines and bombs, dropped during the Vietnam war 18 years ago, from an area of land totaling more than 12 million square meters. To meet the February 1993 deadline for complete erection of pylons, the company has to involve 21 units in removing 700,000 cubic meters of earth and rock and pouring 64,000 cubic meters of concrete. It expects to complete the cable connection along this section by October next year. Meanwhile, the first two 38-meter pylons have been turned out by the Dong Anh Electrical Equipment Factory and the Yen Vien Mechanical Tool Factory in Hanoi.

Pylons and poles are among several Vietnamese-made products to be used in the Trans-Viet line, the total costs of which are submitted as $260 million. The bulk of the equipment to be imported from Japan and the Ukraine will cost about $190 million.

Australia

Peacekeeping Force in Cambodia May Withdraw

BK0104071492 Hong Kong AFP in English 0649 GMT 1 Apr 92

[Text] Canberra, April 1 (AFP)—The 495 Australian soldiers in the U.N. peacekeeping force in Cambodia will be withdrawn if the peace settlement breaks down, Prime Minister Paul Keating said on Wednesday.

"Australian forces will be in Cambodia to help keep a peace on which the Cambodian parties themselves have agreed," Keating told parliament here.

"If we conclude that there is no longer a peace to keep in Cambodia, the Australian and other U.N. forces will have to be withdrawn."

The statement appeared to mollify the opposition, which on Tuesday accused Foreign Minister Gareth Evans of "astounding naivete" over Cambodia.

Replying to Keating, Liberal Party leader John Hewson said the opposition supported the commitment of Australian troops to the U.N. force because the Cambodian people "deserve to have every chance to secure a genuine and lasting peace."

Keating said that "if conditions are right in Cambodia," the main contingent from Australia would begin deploying "this month."

He did not explain what the right conditions would be.

The 495 soldiers joining the U.N. Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), include 65 communications experts who are already there as part of the U.N. Advance Mission.

Keating rejected suggestions that the peace agreement, signed in Paris last year, was flawed because it included the Khmer Rouge who ruled Cambodia for more than four years in the mid-1970's and have been blamed for hundreds of thousands of deaths.

"Involvement of the Khmer Rouge in the process does not reflect a judgement by the Australian or other governments that the Khmer Rouge can now be trusted," he said.

"Rather, it reflects a realistic assessment that the only available effective way of containing the military threat they pose, and of ending the civil war, was to involve them and their main backers—China—as parties to the agreement."

During heated exchanges in the Senate earlier this week, the opposition spokesman on foreign affairs, Robert Hill, accused Evans of "ignoring clear evidence that the Khmer Rouge is stepping up its campaign of seriously undermining the peace process for its own political gain."

Nuclear Waste Research Pact With China Eyed

BK0204044692 Hong Kong AFP in English 0406 GMT 2 Apr 92

[Text] Sydney, April 2 (AFP)—China has agreed to help research and develop an Australian technique for sealing radioactive waste in man-made rock, government scientists said here Thursday.

"Initially we will assist them to develop Synroc," said Adam Jostesons, director of the advanced materials programme for the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO).

"The benefit to us is that we will get access to radioactive waste, since Australia does not have a nuclear energy program."

Synroc is an artifical combination of naturally occurring rocks which are known to be impervious to radioactivity.

ANSTO has spent about 25 million dollars (19 million U.S.) over 12 years to develop Synroc, which it believes is more reliable than the glass containers used in countries with commercial nuclear programmes.

The commonest nuclear fuel is uranium, one of the few naturally occurring radioactive substances.

"Nature has contained this material in rocks for thousands, if not millions, of years," ANSTO spokesman Chris Tweedie explained, "so we thought why not look at how it does that and try to simulate it by man-made methods."

A typical nuclear power station generating 1,000 megawatts of electricity produces 30 tonnes of spent fuel yearly. Once uranium and plutonium have been recovered for recycling in reactors, about one tonne of high-level waste is left.

The waste requires between 100,000 and a million years to decay to acceptable levels of radioactivity, and the traditional way of disposing of it is to bury it in 40-gallon (200-litre) containers made of borosilicate—glass containing huge amounts of lead.

"Radioactive materials generate heat, and there are fears that borosilicate may develop cracks and leach contaminated water into the earth," Tweedie said.

"The process may take place over centuries, but we need to lock up radioactive byproducts for hundreds of thousands of years."

Documents published by ANTSO assert that Synroc, which is made from the oxides of titanium, zirconium, calcium, barium and aluminium, is "at least 1,000 times more resistant to leaching than borosilicate" in boiling water at 100 degrees Celsius."

The advantage increases at higher temperatures, the documents say, and "glass flakes and cracks badly after a few days' exposure to high-pressure water at 300 degrees Celsius."

The waste which ANTSO will be using in experiments in China "comes from defence programs," Jostesons said.

"It is not dissimilar to reactor waste but is fairly diluted in fission materials."

Jostesons described the agreement with China as "just the beginnings of our cooperation" and said it provided for "one-man exchanges."

ANTSO is already collaborating on similar research programs in Japan, Italy and Britain.

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